TIM[illegible]

AND THE

[illegible]nd of Tim[illegible]

OR,

Two Discourses;

[illegible] first about *Redemption* of *Time*, the [illegible]
cond about *Consideration of our latter end*.

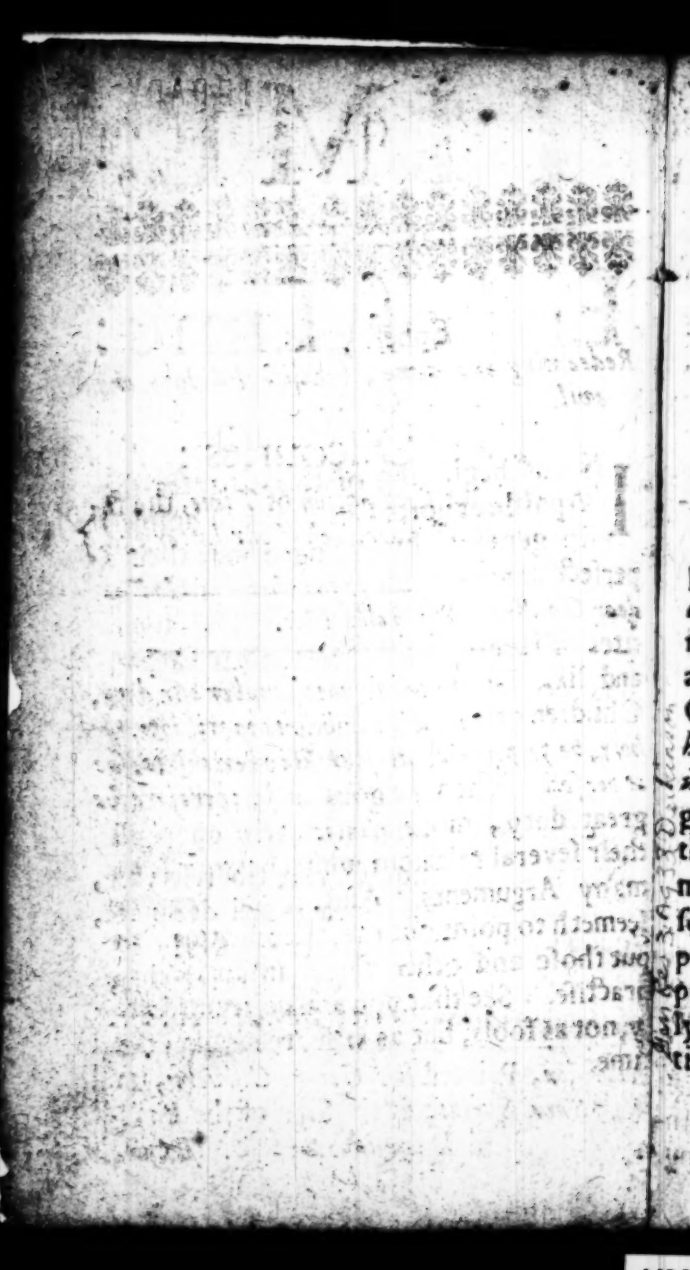
By *John Fox*.

Psal. 90. 12. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.*

[illegible]am. 1. 9. *Her filthiness is in her skirts, [illegible] [illegible]mbreth not her last end, therefore [illegible] down wonderfully.*

[illegible] pudet te reliquias vitæ tibi reservare, [illegible]id solum tempus bonæ menti destinare, [illegible] in nullam rem conferri possit! Quam serum est, tunc vivere incipere, cum desinendum est? *Sen. de brev.* [illegible]

[illegible]ondon, Printed for *George Cal*[illegible] *Sam. Sprint*, at the Sign of [illegible] in *Duck*[illegible]



Ephes. 5. 16.

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

IN the beginning of this Chapter the Apostle exhorts Christians to holiness in general, by setting before them a perfect pattern, *Be ye followers of God as dear Children, and walk in love.* The favourites of Heaven must imitate their Father, and like *Gideons* brethren, resemble the Children of a King; The precept is, *Be ye holy, be ye perfect, as your Heavenly Father is perfect:* Then he goes on to press this great duty, more particularly upon all their several relations, which he urgeth by many Arguments. And in the Text he seemeth to point out the opportunity, to put those and other Christian duties into practise. See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.

1020811

Explication of the Words.

χρόνος *Tempus, ſpatium temporis:* καιρὸς *eſt opportunitas.*

Time is taken under a double notion: there is the ſpace of time, and there is the opportunity of time: *Tempus longum*, and *tempus commodum*; time and opportunity differ? time is the duration, or ſucceſſion of ſo many minutes, hours, days or years, one after the other, from the beginning of a mans life, to the end thereof, *Job* 7. 1. 14, 14. *Is there not an appointed time for man upon Earth?* Opportunity is the time apted and fitted in order to this or that work or buſineſs, *viz.* a meeting of time and means together, to effect the end. This is called the ſeaſon or tempeſtivity of time, when time, tide, and wind meet and claſp together, *Eccle.* 3. 1. *To every thing there is a ſeaſon or opportunity of doing*: time may be continued when the ſeaſon of time is ended; the ſails of time may be a loſt, when the gale of opportunity is loſt. Every time is not a ſpring-time, a ſeed-time, a gaining time. Manna was not to be had but in the morning.

ing. The beauty of time is the opportunity of time *Eccles.* 3. 11. He hath made every thing beautiful in his time, this part of time we are to redeem: Redeeming denotes the excellent worth and preciousnes of time, a commodity to be valued above the Gold of *Ophir*. *Solomon* bids us *buy the truth, Prov.* 23. 23. Our dear Lord counselled a miserable Church to *buy Gold and white rayment, Rev.* 3. 18. And *Paul* exhorts us to *buy the time*, a Jewel of that price, which must be redeemed at any rate. Base or vile things are not wont to be redeemed, but things of worth, namely mens Liberties, Estates, Lives, *&c.* So our precious time. *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

The words contain two general parts.

1. *An Exhortation to a duty, Redeemeth time.*
2. *The reason of it, because the days are evil.*

From the words we may observe this

Doctrine, which shall be the subject of my ensuing discourse.

Doct. *The best of Saints, or the redeemed of God, have need to redeem the time.* This Epistle was written to a very famous flourishing Church in the purest times of the Gospel, amongst whom they were called *Saints, and faithful in Christ Jesus*, Chap. 1. 1. and *chosen of God in Christ, before the foundation of the world*, Vers. 4. and really converted, and brought into a state of life. Moreover, they had learned the duty of Mortification, one of the hardest lessons in Christianity, Chap. 4. 22. And were also *sealed unto the day of Redemption*, Chap. 1. 13. 4, 30. and *had the earnest of their Heavenly Inheritance:* And yet, they whose attainments were so high, must redeem the time. The same thing is prest in different terms, *Eccles.* 9. 10 It's called a working while it is day, *Jo.* 9. 4 In the handling of this position, I shall shew you.

1. First, *When time may be said to be redeemed.*

2. *What.*

2. *What time must be redeemed.*
3. *How time must be redeemed.*
4. *Why time must be redeemed.*
5. *Motives and Directions to help you.*

First, When is time redeemed?

Answ. When time and duty like those two twins, *Jacob* and *Esau*, take hold one of another; or as two loving yoak-fellows, go hand in hand; when duty attends time, as the shadow the body, or as the Maiden her Mistress.

This is to fill up time with duty, and to take opportunity by the fore-lock, or in Scripture phrase, to do the work of the day, in the day. And to this end opportunities or seasons are to be desired, as they offer an occasion of service, and of doing our duty. This we may see in holy *David*, *Psal.* 122. 1. *I was glad when they said unto me, come, let us go up to the house of the Lord.* When there was a way open to Worship God in the beauty of Holiness, *David* rejoyced to see the true Worshippers improve their opportunity, to go to that City, the name of which was *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there, *Ezek.* 48. 38.

And the Prophet *Zechariah* brings in the Saints of God rejoycing in the same things, *Zech.* 8. 20, 21, 22. *Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and seek the Lord of Hosts in* Jerusalem: *I will go also.* The Saints of old were wont to rejoyce when the Sabbath came, because of the holy and heavenly duties of that day: Opportunities and duty are always to be joyned, *Gal.* 6. 10. This is to live according to the wil of God, 1 *Pet.* 4. 2. and to walk circspectly, redeeming the time, *Eph.* 5. 15, 17.

2. When we are truly careful to make up former negligence with double diligence, redeeming the time, we recover our loss. Time, according to this phrase seemeth to be taken captive, and we must redeem it. Redemptions are made by purchase; to redeem a thing is to buy it for a price; the price we redeemed it with is labour, travel, faithful and serious diligence, and greater activity and vigour in the prosecution of our duty. When what of time or seriousness hath been wanting in one day or duty, is made up and supplied in the next;

Qui quid ætatis retro est, mors tenet: Sen. in. Epist.

next; this is the way to repair our sad soul-damages. *For the time past of our lives may suffice us to have wrought the will of the will of the Gentils*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. Christians, our sins have been many and mighty, but our services few and mean, therefore put the best leg before. Be not as the sluggard, like the door upon the hinges, but as the Sun in the heavens, that rejoyceth to run his race. *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*, *Prov.* 10. 4. I heard of one, who being a prisoner in a dark dungeon, when the light was brought to him for a little time to eat his diet, would pull out his Bible and read a Chapter, saying, he could find his mouth in the dark, but no read in the dark. An Argument that he made conscience of redeeming his time. Sirs, to be watchful, diligent, laborious in the faithful improvement of all your time, talents, gifts, graces, is the thing here intended. The precept is for labour, *Luke* 13. 24. 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. And the diligent in duty hath the promise of the Glory, *Heb.* 11. 9. *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*, *Rom.* 2. 7.

2. What time must be redeemed? *Answ.* All time.

Time is so precious that not any of it must be lost. The whole time of our life must be imployed either about our souls in the service of God, or in the works of our callings, or in order thereunto. Particularly.

1. *The time of youth.*
2. *The time of health and strength.*
3. *The time of affliction.*
4. *The time of Gospel.*
5. *The time of the Sabbath, or the Lords day in special must be redeemed.*

1. First, *The time of youth* must be redeemed. The great God stands much upon priority, to have the first and best. The first ripe fruits, the first that openeth the womb. O then offer the *Isaac* of thy youth, the spring and flower of thy age to God, and stay not until the evil day. Begin first with him from whom thou hast thy being.

go about the grand affair and work of thy dear and never dying soul before thou doſt ingulf thy self in the cares of this world. Reſolve to preſent the firſt ripe fruits, to that good and gracious God, who diſireth the firſt ripe fruits. In the bright morning of thy life match thy ſoul to the King of glory, and become his Bride before thou art defloured, and defiled, by ſin and the World. If the Celeſtial ſeeds of grace be ſown in the morning, the pleaſant and ſweet flowers ſpringing out of theſe ſeeds, will invite the Lord Jeſus to come and walk in his Garden, *Cant.* 5. 1. If thou would be the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt, let him that made the houſe, be the firſt and chief Inhabitant, and ſuffer not thy heart to be a habitation for Dragons and Devils, which will be thine undoing to all eternity.

You young-men, and young-women, know, that the infinitely gracious God holds out the Golden Scepter, and inviteth you to come unto him. The ruddy *David*, the Child *Samuel*, the young *Timothy*, God calls, 1 *Samuel* 1. 11, 12. 1 *Sam.* 3. 10. 1 *Tim.* 4. 12. and the ſooner you come, the better it will be. Say then, this inſtant, behold we come,

thine

thine we are, thine we will be; come now, and take thine own, God will accept you, and take it kindly, his arms and bosom are open to you, *Jer.* 2. 2, 3. *I remember the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine Espousals, when the first fruits was Holiness to the Lord.* If you would have the respect and kindness of a God, offer unto him the firstlings of the flock, *Gen.* 4. 4. *viz.* thy youthful days. If a company of aged feeble persons, or cripples were tendered to the King for service, he would not accept them. 1 *Sam.* 14. 52. *Mal.* 1. 8, 13, 14. *David* from his youth, and *Josiah* while he was young, began to seek the Lord, *Psal.* 71. 17. 2 *Chron.* 34. 3. Young men, if you receive the seed of Grace in the morning of your age, it will take the deeper root and impression upon your hearts, and cause you to bring forth fruit in old age. Cloth will keep color best that's dyed in the Wool; and the Vessel will scent longest of that liquor, with which it is first seasoned, O then,

Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, Eccl. 12. 2.

Prov. 22. 6.

2. *The time of health and strength* is to be improved: You that are now strong, and

and lively, must not expect to be so always: You as well as others must count upon diseases, sickness, weakness, which will confine you to your Houses, Chambers, and Bed: Now then, while your strength and health of body, and natural vigour is continued, be mindful of your work and time. The great duties and difficulties in Heavens way are set forth by striving, Wrestling, fighting, running which

Luke 13. 24.
1 *Cor.* 9 24. 25.
Eph. 6. 12.
1 *Tim.* 6. 12.

requires the best of our time and most of our strength. Can a sick and weak man run so as to obtain, or so strive and conflict as to overcome, judge ye: King *Saul* chose the strong and valiant for his service. 'Tis the strong must run the race, *Psal.* 19. 4. and the young must overcome the evil one, 1 *John* 2. 14. If a man had a business of great concernment, or a matter of life and death, that requireth time, strength, and diligence for the doing of it, and should omit it until he were stricken in years, or until sickness and weakness invade him, every one would be ready to charge him with folly.

If a Carrier amongst many stout strong

ſtrong Horſes, hand one poor, lame, ſick Horſe, and ſhould lay the burden of the greateſt weight and worth upon that poor weak jade, we ſhould conclude that either he was cruel, or that he wanted the underſtanding of a man. This is our caſe, the great affair of Immortal ſouls requireth time, ſtrength, diligence, and all little enough. And ſhall we charge the whole ſtreſs of our everlaſting ſtate, upon a few days ſickneſs, and weakneſs, before our death, God forbid, *Eccleſ.* 12. 3, 4.

3. *The time of affliction* muſt be redeemed. Chriſtians, *in the day of adverſity we muſt conſider*, *Eccleſ.* 7. 14. it was the time of *Jacob's* trouble, when the Apoſtle exhorted believers to redeem the time: God ſpeaks by his rod, as well as by his Word, to both which we muſt have an ear. God ſometimes teacheth his, as *Gideon* the men of *Succoth*, *Judg.* 8. 16. with Thorns and Bryars of the wilderneſs. Let the affliction be of what kind or degree ſoever, either upon our Perſons, Names, Eſtates, Families, Church or Kingdom, yea, and of

Schola crucis eſt Schola lucis. Luth. Pſ. 94. 12.

long

long continuance, we are to look upon it as from God, and for our good. For every affliction ſpeaks to us in the Language of *Ehud* to *Eglon*, *I have a meſſage unto thee from God*: And God will reckon with us for the rods he lays upon us. I ſhall ſpeak more to this in another place.

14. *The time of the Goſpel* muſt be redeemed. Goſpel time is our ſpiritual harveſt, and it is notorious folly to ſleep or loiter in Harveſt. The time of the Goſpel is a time indeed, *viz.* a time of light, a time of love, a time of life, a time of liberty. Now the trumpet of Jubilee ſoundeth, and all debts and morgages may be taken up and releaſed. Here's *liberty for the poor Captives, and the opening of the Priſon to them that are bound.* *'Tis now an accepted time, a day of Salvation,* 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. A time to accept, or a time to be accepted, a golden and glorious time indeed. Behold, now there is a broad and clear way to the Mercy ſeat; the flaming ſword

Math. 4. 16.
2 *Tim.* 1. 10.
Ezek. 13. 8.
Rom. 5. 8.
Iſa. 61. 1.
John 6. 16.

Tempus acceptum, or *tempus acceptabile*: *Bez. in loc.*

is gone, the partition wall is down, all Bars and Gates are removed, an Act of indempnity is proclaim'd, and there is a free admission for all to come and be saved; pardons are ready, *Isa.* 55. 6, 7. *Isa.* 45.

Sinners, your dear Lord Jesus, the great Peace-maker, is now an impotant Suitor unto your perishing souls, namely an inviting, knocking, waiting, promising Christ, *Prov.* 22. 9. 4. *Isa.* 65. 2. *Math.* 11. 28. *Rev.* 3. 20. *Cant.* 5 2. *John* 6. 36. The treasures of grace are opened and offered to sale upon easie terms, *without money, and without price*, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 3. 17. O make speed and come, make the purchase, buy the pearl of price that's better then Rubies, and you shall have a treasure in heaven. The favour of Gods precious blood, white raiment, tryed gold, and the eternal life of your never dying souls is worth the having. Consider also, that now the Holy Ghost calls and offers his assistance to close the bargain, to tye the marriage knot between Christ and Souls, *Heb.* 3. If you lose this opportunity, you may never

Quod offertur gratia ex gratia Dei est, qui sua contuit rebus omnibus momenta, ut oblatam occasionum arripiamus.

never have the like. The Spirit and the Bride say come, *Rev.* last. 17.

5. *The time of the Sabbath or Lords day* must be redeemed: we must have a specially care of sanctifying that day, it being the Sabbath of the Lord our God. This golden day from morning to night must be spent in the service and worship of our Lord, either in publick, private, or secret duties, and no part of it must be lost. Take no liberty upon that day for frothy, vain and unprofitable discourse, or recreations, or to ride, buy, sell, or work. This dreadful, God provoking sin of Sabbath-breaking, is a sin in fashion; hundreds in this Nation serve the Devil more upon the Lords day then on other dayes; Then men are at leisure to serve the Devil, and satisfie their lusts, to go to the Ale-house, or to exercise themselves in sports and pastimes. O that Magistrates, Ministers, Masters of Families, and Parents, would look to it, *Neh.* 13. 17. The Lord of the Sabbath commandeth thee, that *thou and thy Son, thy Daughter*

The youth that lately was hang'd for murdering his Fellow Servant, confess'd that his Sabbath breaking made way for all his other prodigious sins.

Daughter, thy man servant, and all within thy gate, keep that day holy.

The Sabbath is called a holy convocation, *Lev.* 23. 2. and the Lord of the day is an infinitely holy, just, and jealous God. The Sabbath heretofore was called *Regina dierum*, the Queen of days; in the New Testament it is called the Lords day, *Rev.* 1. 10. a day in which we commemorate the greatest mercy, *viz.* the glorious Resurrection of our crucified Lord, and that which the purest Christians in the purest times did carefully observe.

In the Primitive times, a serious and strict observation of the Lords day, was a trial or badge of Christianity. When the question was propounded, *Servasti Dominicum?* hast thou kept the Lords day, the answer was turn'd, *Christianus sum, intermittare non possum.* I am a Christian, and cannot intermit it. It was a saying of an eminent Divine, that he would judge of a mans Religion according to the reverence and care he had of keeping the Sabbath. Christians, you are to keep your Lords rest, and perform the holy duties of his worship chearfully, reverently, spiritually, *Joh.* 4. 24. If ever you think to celebrate an

an eternal Sabbath with God in glory, be careful of this duty. To enforce it, consider.

1. How strictly the holy God imposeth it, and to what end it is, *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it Holy, Exod.* 20. 8. This blessed day for communion with God, is to be premeditated upon before it cometh; therefore in the evening before the Sabbath, let all your necessary occasions be done up, that you may have nothing but what becometh the work of that day: Be like *David's* good man, *Ps.* 112. 5. *ordering your affairs with discretion*, especially your Spiritual affairs. If you expected the company of some worthy friend, would you be found in a sluttish posture, or sweeping and cleansing your houses on that day, and all out of order? On the Lords day you should vehemently expect the approach and presence of the King of glory, therefore make all ready to entertain him.

2. Remember the excellent Epithetes and Titles of this blessed day, it is called *a High day, a Holy day, the holy of the Lord, honourable, Isa.* 58. 13. Therefore let it be redeemed, lose no more Sabbaths.

3. Con-

3. Consider the blessings and soul benefits of that day, if it be rightly observed. It is your Lords Market day, in the which you have the precious Oyl, the Golden Mines and treasures of grace opened that day. There are spiritual dainties for your hungry souls, to which you are by Christ invited that day, *Isa.* 54. 1. The Holy Ghost doth breath and blow that day, by the secret and sweet gales whereof, Saints mount up toward Heaven. The great God comes down, and gracious souls ascend that day, *Rev.* 1. 10. And the Eunuchs that keep Gods Sabbaths have the promise of a name in his house for ever, *Isa.* 56. 4, 5. I might add the severe threatnings, and Gods signal judgements upon the prophaners of the Sabbath, or Lords day. The man that was found gathering sticks upon the Sabbath, by an immediate command from God, was stoned to death, *Numb.* 15. 32, 34, 35, 36.

How

How time must be redeemed.

1. *By taking and improving all opportunities for the glorifying of God.*
2. *By laying hold on the present time, and now a day of grace, for settling and securing your everlasting state.*
3. *By improving the present means of grace for your speedy growth in grace.*
4. *By doing all the good you can to others while you may.*
5. *By labouring to keep up constant communion with God in holy duties.*
6. *By improving every providence and outward cross for inward and spiritual advantages.*
7. *By casting up your accounts every day that you may make even with God.*
8. *By labouring to order every days work in reference to your last day; that having finished you work, you may be fit to leave this World.*

1. *By taking and improving all occasions for the glorifying of God:* Dear Christians, this is your Fathers business, and the great

great Errand for which you had your being.

You were born, and new born, to serve the interest of the holy and blessed God in the World; this is that glorious end for which you should spend your strength and time, and lay out your selves to the very utmost. That which is the chief end of your life, viz. to display and propagate Gods glory in the World, must not be neglected; other things are infinitely inferiour, and must be subordinated unto this. For the thoughts and designs of serving the Interest of your Lord, is that which you must be always driving on in this evil World. God expects it, *Thou shalt have no other God before me*, *Exod.* 20. 3. God will be exalted in the heart, and in our life too. I will be glorified, saith the Lord, before all the people, *Lev.* 10. 3. One way or other, the great Creatour will have glory by all his creatures. *God made all things for himself*, the world to be a visible and wonderful declaration of excellent glory, so that it is due debt, *Psal.* 29. 1, 2. *Psal.* 96. 8. *Give unto*

Tempus non potest Deo consecrari, nisi quo modo redemptum. Calvin in loc.

the

the Lord the glory due unto his Name. To walk with God in our whole course, to design his glory, is the prime mark of our Saint-ship and sincerity. This is the white in the mark we should aim at, the thing we should pursue resolutely, vigorously, with all our might. Whether we Pray, or Preach, or read, or hear, or celebrate Sabbaths, or converse, exhort, or reprove, or indeed buy, sell, plow, sow, eat, drink, let it not be done for the World, or the interest of the flesh: We should have such a high esteem of God, and such strong desires, and strong affections to him, that the pleasing, praising, and magnifying of of God in all our ways, might be our main endeavour.

Christians, you are chosen out of the World to be Gods witnesses, if you do not appear for God, his honour and interest, none will: All (saith the holy Apostle) seek their own, *Phil.* 2. 21. (but you are to deny and keep under self,) which is directly opposite to the honour of your God. Wicked men are bold and resolute in a way of sin, to bear up the interest of the Prince of darkness, and will not you be as active for the interest of your Lord? The Mar-

tyrs

tyrs would rather dye then dishonour God, who burning with zeal to Gods glory, would glorifie him in the very fire: God hath made you honourable, *Isa.* 43. 4. being Kings and Priests, and inrolled you amongst the first born that are written in Heaven. You have a place in his heart, and a name in his house; you are vessels of honour, and shall be honoured, *that we might be to the glory of his grace*: Your everlasting Father hath mark'd you, and set his stamp and seal upon you, and put a principle of life within you, that we might love him, and live unto him. The man that refus'd to beat up his deceased brothers name, *Deut.* 25. 9. was to have his face spit on in the face of the Congregation. But shame and everlasting contempt will be upon their faces, that will not stand up for the honour of the holy God, *Dan.* 12. 2. Christians, 'tis the sin that reflects dishonour on Gods name, therefore allow it not in your selves, and prevent it what you can in others. Redeem your time, and redeem Gods glory; your days are evil, and you have but a few days for this work, do it, and God will own you and advance you to a Kingdom.

Belov-

Beloved in the Lord, though you differ in other things, agree in this, to glorifie God on Earth, *that you may with one mind and one mouth glorifie God, Rom.* 15. 5. Every one that's godly crying out with holy *David, Pſal.* 34. 3. *O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together, 1 Cor.* 10. 32. *John* 14. *Epheſ.* 1. 6. *As many as are perfect, will be thus minded, Pſal.* 3.

2. *By laying hold upon the preſent time, or now-day of grace, for the ſetling and ſecuring your everlaſting ſtate, or bleſſed Eternity.* Your ſouls concerns are the greateſt, yea of infinite moment; and the things of Eternity claim a ſuperiority. If you purpoſe to do your ſouls good, you muſt firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God, *Matth.* 6. 33. and take the Kingdom of heaven with violence, *Matth.* 11. 12. *Let me dye the death of the righteous*, or a *Lord have mercy on me* when you come to dye, will not do, *Numb.* 23. 10. *Mat* 25. 11. And know ſinner, it muſt be done in this thy day; now, or never, *Luke* 16. 49. While the door of grace is open, before the Bridge be drawn, and Mercy gone, *Iſa.* 55. 6. This muſt be done.

1. By complying with the preſent call

of the Goſpel, in cloſing immediately with Jeſus Chriſt, and in giving and reſigning your ſelves wholly unto him. This is that one thing neceſſary that muſt be done ſpeedily to ſecure your ſouls, to provide for their everlaſting welfare. Therefore do not procraſtinate or delay it for a World, 'Tis thy grand affair, that muſt make thee or marr thee to Eternity. *He that believes, ſhall be ſaved; he that believes not is condemned already*, *John* 3. 36. *John* 8. 24. *John* 1. 12. If you do not now embrace the Lord Jeſus, upon the great and glorious terms of the Goſpel, you will as certainly be damn'd as if you were in Hell amongſt Devils already, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 8, 9. *Heb.* 2. 3. *and* 3. 18. You that want Chriſt, will you welcome Chriſt, ſaying with thy ſoul, Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, enter thou King of Glory, *Pſal.* 24. 7. Thine is the Kingdom, take the Throne, ſit upon the chiefeſt Chariot, take up thy lodging in my heart for ever, and ſuffer not the dead Child to lye in the place of the living Child; a dead World and damnable luſts, where my Lord ſhould lodge: O bleſſed day, and happy hour, in which the Heir of Heaven, and periſhing Sin-

Sinners meet and are married! Here's a match for you! Will you renounce all others, Sin, the devil, and carnal Companions, and joyn your self to the Prince of Life? Speak the word, and the work is done; open the door, and he will certainly come in, and take up his abode for ever. All that the Father hath given him shall come to him; and him that cometh, he will in no wise cast out, *John* 6. 37. *Rev.* 3. 23. *Isa.* 26. 13. *Isa.* 44. 5. 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. *Acts* 16. 30.

2. By repenting without delay. This is the second great work, in which you must make speed, for untill this be done you are in danger every moment of dropping down to Hell. Remember the sad story of the woman, who when her house was on fire, had her Child burned while she was saving some of her goods. Sinners, your danger is great, your opportunities are flying, fly you as fast. Let me say to thee as the Angel to *Lot*, *Gen.* 19. 16, 17. when in danger of being burned, *Escape for thy life, stay not, lest thou be consumed.* The life and salvation of thy soul, cannot be secured without this. *Acts* 11. 18. 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. *Luke* 13. 3. Therefore labour to know

the plague of thy heart, 1 *Kings* 8. 38. and plow up the fallow ground; sow in tears, and set about it this instant, before this day be ended, this Sermon ended; lest it should be said of thee, as of that woman *Jezabel*, *Rev.* 2. 21. *I gave her space to repent, and she repented not; and so Gods fury, fury come forth like fire, and burn, and none can quench it*, *Jer.* 4. 3, 4.

3. By making it your great business to secure an interest in Christ, getting your evidences for heaven bright and clear. Christians, till you have gotten the pledges and tokens of Gods love to your souls, till you are assured of the truth of your faith, and the sincerity of your repentance, and hereby of the pardon of sin, and of your interst in the Lord Jesus, you can have little comfort in your souls, or boldness towards God. Therefore, with might and main work out your salvation, *Phil.* 2. 12. Make your calling and election sure, that upon certain grounds you may say as the Church, *Lam.* 3. 24. *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul. Doubtless thou art our Father*, *Isa.* 63. 16. Or as holy *Job* in his deep affliction, *Job* 19. 25. *I know my Redeemer liveth: I am thine, save me,*

Psal.

Psal. 119.91. *Truely I am thy Servant, I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine, Cant.* 2.16. Christians, this assuring-Faith is attainable; pray for it, and vigorously press after it, that you may be sealed up unto the day of redemption, that so an entrance may be ministred unto you, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11. And O how well have they redeem'd their precious time, that have secured their never-dying Souls. Know this, that assurance requires both diligence and perseverance; therefore you must be constant in the use of means, and lay hold on every opportunity of enjoying the Gospel. This your Lord commendeth in *Mary*, calling her attendance on the Word preached, a chusing the good part, *Luke* 10.42. There you will taste the Chrystal streams, and view the golden Mines of sound Doctrine, and Wells of Salvation. This is the place of spiritual wonders, where the Dead are raised, the Lepers cleansed, the eyes of the Blind opened, and the Devils ejected. Gospel Ordinances are the Golden galleries, where the King of glory walketh: The Bed, where immortal souls are be-

gotton unto God, and in which the broken hearts do travel till Christ be formed in them. Through these Golden Pipes, the Water of Life is poured out upon thirsty panting souls, for the chearing of their spirits. Here is the Doctrine preach'd and words whereby thou must be saved, *Acts* 10. Here Christs Mother found him, it being the place where the Bridegoom and the Bride meet and solace themselves together, Do not forsake the solemn Assemblies: remember what *Thomas* lost by being absent when Christ came. O come to the Posts of Wisdom's doors, and with empty Pitchers set your selves under the Spouts of the Sanctuary. 'Tis upon these waters the Angel moves, and souls are healed: This is the School where all Gods children are taught of God, and instructed unto the Kingdom of heaven.

3. *By improving the present means of Grace, for your speedy growth in Grace*, that so the grain of Mustard-seed might become a great Tree, *Math.* 13, 52. The Christian course is compared to a Race, a walk, to the morning light, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. *Rom.* 8. 1. and therefore you must go on, and be progressive whilst you live.

Be-

Believers ſhould be as greedy of grace, as the men of the World are of gain; becauſe one grain of Grace is more worth then a houſe full of Gold, yea better then Rubies. You are compared to Stars, to fruitful Trees planted by the Rivers of Water, and you ſhould gliſter and ſhine in this dark night of helliſh profaneneſs, and live down, and convince this accuſing debauched generation. The Trees of the Lord ſhould be full of ſap, *Pſal.* 104. 16. being grafted in the true Olive, and under the ſweet dews of Heaven, you ſhould flouriſh in the Courts of the Lord, and bring forth fruit in old age, *Pſal.* 92. 12, 13, 14. Chriſtians, keep your Lamps burning, and hold on your way, that the *David* of grace may wax ſtronger and ſtronger. Make no ſtop, but ſtrain to get and keep before, that you may win the prize. Growth of Grace is required of the higheſt Gyants, as well as the loweſt Dwarf in Grace. They ſay of the Crocodile, he groweth as long as he liveth; and when he ceaſeth to grow, he ceaſeth to live. How many poor creeping Chriſtians are there, who can hardly keep life and ſoul together, being like the door upon

the hinges, *Prov.* 26. 14. and why but becauſe they are come to a pitch, and paſt growth, as ſoon as ſprung up above ground. If there be the truth of grace, there will be an endeavour after the ſtrength of grace; where is life, there is growth, 2 *Pet.* 2. 2. *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day*, *Prov.* 4. 18. Sirs up and be doing, preſs toward the mark, *add to your faith, vertue; to vertue, knowledge; to knowledge, temperance, to tempirance, patience; to patience, Godlineſs; that ye be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Be ye therefore ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And if you do theſe things, you ſhall never fall*, 1 *Cor.* 15. *verſ. laſt*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 1.

4. *By doing all the good we can to others, while we have opportunity.* As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men. Hereby we imitate that character of divine goodneſs, *Pſ.* 116. 88. *Thou art good, and doſt good. Let every one pleaſe his neighbour for his good to edification*, *Rom.* 15. 2. Theſe four ways ye muſt do good to others.

1. Firſt, This muſt be done eſpecially in

in your Families, to them that are more immediately under your charge, and for whom you must shortly give an account to the dreadful Judge of quick and dead. If Christ be come to thy heart, Let Religion be set up in thy house without delay. If thou art really gracious, be relatively good, seeking the profit of many, that they may be saved, 1 *Cor.* 13. 33 Sirs, if you would not be guilty of soul-blood, soul-murther, resolve to set up the worship of God in your Families, and let Family-work stoop to Family-worship. Endeavour to teach thy children and servants, to know, obey, and serve the Lord, who is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. If you are the Children of faithful *Abraham*, do as he did, and walk in his path, *John* 8 39. The holy heart-searching God witnesseth of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 19. *I know him, that he will command his Children, and his houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.* 'Tis a great trust, to have the care and charge of souls; therefore let not your Children and Servants live as they list, but command them out of the way of sin, which will certainly bring them to Hell. O that Pa-

rents and Masters of Families would take up holy *Joshua's* resolution, *Josh.* 24. 14. *As for me and my House we will serve the Lord.* But on the contrary many seem, as it were, to have banish'd God and the practice of Piety out of their houses; as if Parents and Children, Masters, and Servants were resolved to serve the Devil, and go to Hell, *John* 8. 44. The neglect of Family-duties is a dreadful and provoking sin, and that (as a Godly Minister said) which will untile the house, and causeth God to rain curses upon the Table. Read and tremble at the Prophets imprecation, *Jerem.* 10. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, that know the not, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name.* How many Prayerless husbands do give occasion to their Wives to say to them, as *Zipporah* to her husband, *Exod.* 4. 25. *A bloody Husband art thou to me.* Your Wives, Children and Servants, will sadly bewail it, and cry out living or dying, O that ever we were married to such husbands, born of such Parents, bound to such Masters, that had no regard to serve God, or care of souls. If you are Christians indeed, let a constant course of reading in the Word,

Word, Catechising, and Prayer, be kept up in your houses; for when death hath separated you and your relations, it will grieve you to the heart, that you did no more to further the good of their precious Souls, *Acts* 13. 2, 30.

2. By taking all occasions, where-ever you are, or come, to further the conversion of perishing sinners. If you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, and are taken out of the Iron Furnace, as firebrands out of the burning, where is your pity and bowels to souls in perils? Can you be contented to be happy, *Jud.* 22. and to go to Heaven alone, & to endeavour by your prayers, counsels and examples, to perswade and draw others into Heavens way? Wicked men are active for the Devil, who like Snails leave their slime behind them, where ever they come, and are emptying the poyson of sin one into the other, and so furthering their damnation. What multitudes do you see weltring in their blood, and making post-hast to Hell, whose desperate and deplorable case should excite your compassion, and cause you to speak a word in season for their salvation. Your Dear Lord, whom you

dshoul

should imitate, *Went about doing good*, *Act.* 10. 38. He improved his opportunity (*John* 4.) to convert a notorious sinner; though weary and thirsty, was not careful of hastning the meat, because he preferred the opportunity to bring her soul out of Satans snare, and so save her. When at your Tables, or buying, or selling, or travelling, opportunity may be taken to speak of God, and the things of God, and to leave some conviction upon the company. Thus *Philip* falling in with the Eunuch whilst he was riding on his way homewards from *Jerusalem*, closed with him, and was an instrument to save the soul of him he never saw before, *Act.* 8. And by the heavenly discourse that dropped from the mouth of Mr. *Carter*, Pastour of *Brainford* in *Suffolk*, a Gentlewoman was converted while she was waiting on him in his Chamber, warming his Bed. A Word spoken in season through Gods blessing may save a soul; and it is our duty to endeavour it. Mr. *Ignatius Jordan* of *Exeter*, was exceeding instrumental this way; who would go from house to house, to put his neighbours in mind of their Soul-concerns. Holy *David* was not

afraid

afraid or ashamed to speak of God before Kings, and to tell what God had done for his soul: and said he, *I will teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee*, *Psal.* 5. 13. for, *he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death*, *Jam.* 5. 20. When at any time your neighbours are sick, and under the hand of God, take that opportunity to visit them, to put them in mind of Death and judgment, and to make them sensible of the necessity of Faith and repentance, without which there can be no hope of Heaven. Our Proverb is, *To strike while the Iron is hot.* Upon a bed of languishing, when death looks men in the face, they seem serious, and fit to receive the impression of faithful counsel for their souls. To which joyn serious prayer; for, *The prayer of faith* (saith the Apostle) *shall save the sick*, and it may save the soul.

3. By provoking and encouraging our fellow-Brethren in the way to heaven. We must *exhort one another daily, while it is called to day*, *Heb.* 3. 13. *And provoke one another unto love and to good works; and so much the more, as we see the day approaching*, *Heb.* 10. 24, 25.

Wicked

Wicked men, and the Children of the Devil, have their *go with us*, and do ſtir up one another in the way to Hell; and ſhall not Saints edifie and *build up one another in the moſt holy Faith*, *Rom.* 14. 19. 15. 2. 1 *John* 5. 11. *Eph.* 4. 26. 1 *Cor.* 14. 26. *Jude* 20. *They that feared the Lord, ſpeak often one to another*, *Mal.* 3. 16. Chriſtians ought and ſhould ſpend that time in ſerious and profitable diſcourſe, which others ſpend and waſt in idle and vain diſcourſe. Say with the man after Gods own heart, *Come all that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul.* That which you have ſeen and heard, you muſt declare to one another, 1 *John* 3. 3. Hereby be helping forwards towards Heaven, and comforting one another by the comforts wherewith our ſelves are comforted of God, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy Brethren*, *Luke* 22. 32.

4. We muſt do good to others, by diſtributing to their outward wants and neceſſities, and hereby *lay up a treaſure in Heaven, before our treaſure in Earth, fail*, and we loſe both, *Mat.* 19. 21. This is to honour the Lord with your ſubſtance, *Prov.* 3. 9.

3. 9. This is to make friends with the unrighteous Mammon, and to provide your ſelves bags which wax not old a treaſure in the Heaven that faileth not, *Luke* 12. 33. This duty muſt not be forgotten, *Heb.* 13. 16.) becauſe 'tis a ſowing of ſeed, 2 *Cor.* 9. 6. and it will ſpring and bring forth a crop or harveſt in this or the other world *Eccl.* 11. 1, 6. God will not forget it, *Heb.* 6. 10. The Lord Jeſus will certainly reward it, *Mat.* 25. 40. *A well done*, from Chriſt hereafter, will compenſate all the ſervice of *well doers* here, *Mat.* 25. 31.

5. *By labouring to keep up conſtant communion with God in all holy duties.* Chriſtians, you may loſe time in the very ſervice of God, if you are not careful therein to converſe with him. Take heed of a ſlight ſpirit in ſerious performances. God looks upon the heart, and moſt there. Some ſerious preparation is neceſſary, before you approach the preſence of the high and holy God. *Joſeph* ſhav'd himſelf before he would come into *Pharaohs* preſence. Let your heaven-born ſouls in every duty, with the love-ſick Spouſe go out to meet your Lord; and taken up with nothing elſe.

'Tis

'Tis not the picture of the husband, but the presence of the husband, that can satiate the truely loving longing spouse. It is a blessed sight to see souls working towards God, gasping and panting after the Lord Jesus Christ, *Psal.* 42. 1, 2. O labour for such a frame of heart, and bewail a narrow and contracted spirit. Do not perform duties for duties sake, so as to make duties the end of duties: but as the *medium*, by which thy soul may draw nigh to God and meet with him: The countenance and presence of God in a duty is the very Suburbs of glory, yea, the very gate of Heaven, *Gen.* 28. 17. Let this be in thy thoughts, and the very purpose of thy heart, and expect it vehemently in every access to God. Let thy soul *follow hard after God*, and say, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life*, *Psal.* 27. 4. *Psal.* 84. 2. Duties are only the outward Court, but the form, shell, and carkass of Religion, as Pipes without Water, Breasts without Milk, as Sails without Wind, or as a Body without a Soul, that hath no life. The encrease of your grace and holiness depends upon

upon your acquaintance and communion with the God of grace. It was *Moſe* his being in the Mount, that made his face to ſhine; and the Kings being at his Table, that cauſed the Churches *Spikenard* to ſend forth the ſwell thereof, *Cant.* 1. 12. The preſence of the glorious God on a Sabbath, the preſence of God in prayer, or at a Sacrament, will be unto thy ſoul as marrow and fatneſs, and that which will make thy hands to drop with Myrrh, and thy fingers with ſweet-ſmelling Myrrh. Thus it was with the Spouſe, when her Beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, *Cant.* 5. 4, 5.

6, *By improving every Providence, every Comfort, every Croſs, for Gods glory, and our own ſpiritual advantage.* God doth nothing in vain; for he hath a peculiar reſpect unto the good of his people in all his diſpenſations: he doth time, meaſure, and order every dark and afflicting providence for his Churches advantage, *Jer.* 24. 5. *Rom.* 8. 24. *Heb.* 12. 10, 11. God's chaſtning and teaching, commonly go together, therefore it is, we muſt *hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it*, *Mic.* 6. 9. The Rod hath a *Voice*, Beaſts may

may feel the rod, but the believer hearts the rod. God's rod ſhould make us like *Aaron's* rod, bud, bloſſom, and to bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs, *Heb.* 12. 11. Now if you would be bettered by affliction, endeavour to do three things.

1. To underſtand the meaning or mind of God in them, for what ſins committed, or duties neglected, they are ſent: Afflictions are Gods Meſſengers, and we ſhould never be quiet till we know their Errands, *Job* 10. 2.

2. See the hand of God in all thoſe afflictions. So did *David*, *Pſal.* 39. 10. and holy *Job* 1. 11. *Hoſ.* 6. 1.

3. Labour to anſwer the end of God in your ſtraits and troubles; that you might be made more humble, more holy, more heavenly before; that we may ſay, and find, that it hath beed good for us to be afflicted. We have as much reaſon to ſeek unto God for a bleſſing upon our *daily Rod* as upon our *daily Bread.*

7. *Time muſt be redeemed by caſting up your accounts every day, and ſo to make even with God, and not get further into his debt.*

debt. This will be the way to get an acquittance, to procure a pardon, before you are called and forced to an account. Secret duties, if well done, are the sweetest duties; and yet sadly neglected by Saints themselves. You should retire every night, and spend a little time in self-examination; and when you sit alone, commune with your hearts, and call over the passages and actions of the day past. We read *Gen.* 24. 63. That *Isaac* went out in the evening tide to meditate; a precious duty, but rarely practised. Christians should spend void spaces of time in ejaculatory Prayer, and holy Meditation. And O how hard it is to ascend this Mount of heavenly Meditation! 'Tis very easie and delightsom to think of the World, the pleasures of Sin, Friends, Riches, Worldly business, but to Meditate on God, Heaven, Eternity, the insufficiency and vanity of the creature, the bitterness of sin, the certainty of death and judgement, (the very inwards of Religion) is very difficult. Before you lye down upon your beds at night, call your selves to an account by such questions as these:

1. I

1. I have lived many years in the world; What have I been doing all my days? have I anſwered the end of my being?

2. Have I had a holy awe of God in the midſt of my Worldly buſineſs this day? What thoughts of death and Judgement have I had? Where hath my heart been?

3. How have I performed duties this day? What hath been the ſins of this day, the mercies of this day, that I may beg the pardon of the one, and bleſs God for the other?

4. What aſſiſtance and communion with God have I had this day in the duties of his worſhip? have not God and my ſoul been ſtrangers this day, and many days together?

5. What have I done or ſpoken for God and his Glory this day, in my Family or elſe-where? have I demean'd my ſelf like a child of God this day? this is to make Religion our buſineſs, or to walk in the fear of the Lord all the day.

8. *Improve your time by endeavouring to order every days work with reference to your laſt day.* The end of every duty, and the great

great reaſon of redeeming time, lies here, namely, that we may be fit to dye, and ſtand before God. Therefore muſt we glorifie the infinitely holy God, and make him our friend. Hence it is that we muſt ſecure our ſouls, and ſpeedily get into Jeſus Chriſt, and grow in grace, do good to others, call our ſelves to an account, and clear our title unto heaven, that all our work may be done up while it is day, and none left to do, let death call when it will.

The reaſons why our precious time muſt be redeemed, are,

1. Becauſe the days are evil.
2. Becauſe 'tis a conſiderable part of our Chriſtian wiſdom.

Reaſ. 1. *Becauſe the days are evil.* This is the Apoſtles own argument to enforce the duty. Precious time, and evil days run parallel; therefore no part of a little time muſt be loſt. I ſhall inſtance in a few particulars, to make it appear.

1. *The Tares of falſe Doctrine, or Diabolical, Blaſphemous, Damnable Opinions,*

do

do abound. How do the Devils Agents endeavour to raise and undermine the very foundations and principles of the Christian faith? Those old and damnable heresies that have been condemned and expunged out of the Church of God, are greedily embraced and swallowed down by more then a few, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. *and* 4. 3. 2 *Pet.* 1. 12. *Ye therefore, Beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness,* 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. 2 *Tim.* 1. 13.

2. *Mens flagitious lives and most prodigious sins, makes the days still evil.* What execrable abominations are there committed upon the Stage of this evil World. Iniquity abounds, wickedness is in credit, and Religion under disgrace. Many hate the power of Godliness, but are not asham'd to wear the Devil's Livery. May we not complain with the Prophet, and say as *Hosea* 4. 12. *There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land. By Swearing, and Lying, and Killing, and Stealing, and committing Adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood; therefore shall the Land mourn.* And as *Isa.* 12. 15. *For our transgressions are multiplyed before thee, and our*

sins

sins testifie against us; and truth faileth, and he that departeth from Iniquity, maketh himself a pray. And *Amos* 5. 10, 12, 13. *They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, it is an evil time.*

3. Many are back slidden and apostatised. How are the mighty fallen! the falling sickness hath been an Epidemical disease, *Matth.* 24. 12. *Because iniquity shall abound, and the love of many shall wax cold,* *Jer.* 2. 2. 2 *Tim.* 1. 15. *Rev.* 2. 4.

4. Doth not God frown and threaten to remove the Candle-stick, and leave us in darkness? *Rev,* 2. 5. *Amos* 8. 9, 11.

5. How is the Family of God, and friends of Christ, devided and subdivided one from another? *Moab* and *Ammon*, *Herod*, and *Pilate*, can unite against Christ and his Intereſt, when Christ's little Flock are at a distance one unto the other, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3, 4. And when it thus comes to pass, the days are evil, and our time had need be redeem'd.

Reas. 2. *Redeeming the time, will render us truly wise. See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, Eph.* 5. 15. *Eccles.* 6. 5. The wise mans heart (saith *Solomon*) discerneth both Time and Judgement. To work while it is day;

day; and to do a great deal of work in a little time, commendeth the wisdom of the Agent. Whatever Learning, Parts, Endowments, men have, they are not wise unless they redeem the time. The men of *Issachar* were of great account with *David*, because they *had understanding of Times, to know what Israel ought to do*, 1 *Chron.* 12. 32. The wise God, in whose hands is our time, taxes the *Jews* for fools, *not observing the Times*, *Jer.* 8. 7, 8. and so doth our Lord Jesus the Pharisees, *Mat.* 16. 2, 3. Therefore redeeming the Time is called a *walking in wisdom*, as the Apostle expresseth it, *Col.* 4. 5.

The APPLICATION.

Use 1. FIrst, If Time will be redeemed, we may infer, that sure then *there is an Eternity*. Let all the wasters of time, count upon it. It is as certain as any thing in this world, that there is another World. You may venture your Lives, your Souls, and all, upon the truth of it. Why should the blessed Apostle

He *Paul* preſs Believers ſo ſtrictly to redeem time, but in order to their everlaſting welfare? Aſſure thy ſelf of it, and believe it as firmly, as if both eternities did now preſent themſelves to thy bodily eyes, and thou didſt ſee the Devils and reprobates in their chains of darkneſs, and hear them cry and roar in thoſe eternal flames: and alſo, ſee *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the Saints departed, upon the Throne, ſinging the Song of *Moſes*, and the Lamb. This is that which is either believ'd or fear'd by the beſt and worſt of men. O that it might have a deep and laſting impreſſion upon all your hearts.

2. *The opportunity of time is a very precious privileage.* To have a gale of opportunity to convey us to glory, or the white flag upon the wall, inviting us unto our work, to ſue out our pardon before it is to late. Time is a rich invaluable Treaſure, and yet a tranſient treaſure.* Time (Gods Poſt) runs apace; yea, flyes as it were upon Eagles Wings, and will be gone. Time is compared to Golden Sands running between two Eterni-

* *Punctum eſt quod vivimus, & puncto minus.*

ties, and 'tis an infinite mercy they are yet running, that you have a day to work out your ſalvation, to agree with the Adverſary while he is in the way, *viz.* to make up the breach between God and your ſouls, *Rev.* 2. 21. The continuance of Time is very uncertain, *The time is ſhort*, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. The whole is but a ſpan, a very little ſpace. 'Tis but a few days more, and then thy laſt day; a few hours more, and then they departing hour; a few breathings more, and then thy laſt breath.

3. *Time, as precious as it is, and which ſhould be redeem'd at any rate, is often let ſlip.* What ſhall we do to paſs away the time? is common in ſome mens mouths; it's a commodity that lies upon their hands, they know not what to do with it. How profuſe and prodigal are moſt of this great treaſure, who make no improvement of it? How often hath opportunity come to us, and waited on us, but very few are found to lay hold upon it? To how many time-waſters may that killing Text, *Luke* 19. 41, 42. be applyed? And when he came near,

Nonexiguum temporis habemus, ſed multum perdimus. Sen.

near, he beheld the City, and wept; he could not speak it without tears, saying, *If thou hadst known* (even thou at least) *in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace: but now they are hidden from thine eyes.*

4. *Spiritual Sloth, whereby we lose so much of our precious time, is a sore evil, and very dangerous.* Slothfulness (*Solomon* saith) casteth into a deep sleep, *Prov.* 19. 15. The slothful man is like the door on the hinges, *Prov*, 26. 14. The slothful is brother to the great waster, *Prov.* 18. 9. Therefore be not slothful, *Rom.* 12. 11. *Heb.* 6. 12. We read that *Joshua* said to the Sun *Stand still*; but God never said to the soul, *Stand still*. Religion requires action; labour diligence; for it doth not consist in airy empty notions and speculations of the head; but in the exercise of the mind and heart. Habits must be exerted, Grace improved, Heaven (that is all up-hill) must be strived for, and gotten, as it were by force and victory. 'Tis a shameful and deformed sight, to see a man professing Godliness in a Lethergy, and not prose-

Enigma pars est vitæ quem nos vivimus.

Cast off thy lazy and dull spirit & temper, lest thou be found like that wicked, slothful and unprofitable servant, who must be cast into utter darkness, *Mat.* 25. 26. 30. Let me say to you, as the *Danites* to their brethren, having spy'd out a good Land. *Judg.* 18. 9. *Are ye still? arise, and be not slothful to go, and to possess the Land.* The Heavenly Countrey is before you; arise, and work, and lose it not for want of labour. Let not spiritual sloth, by eating out your time, hinder your work, and rob you of your wages, *Rev.* 3. 11.

5. *If the best of Saints should redeem their time, what have sinners need to do?* You that have been slumbring and sleeping all your time, and not gone one step in the way to Heaven, but many in the way to Hell, had need up and be doing, or else you will be eternally undone. *Whilst it is called to day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* Do not spend so freely of this swift and precious stream of Time, every drop of which, hath an influence upon Eternity. *Knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; cast off therefore the work of darkness, and put on the Armour*

mour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the Day; not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envying: but put you on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, Rom. 13. 12, 13. 14.

6. *If Time, and every part and moment of it, must be improved; this serves to confute those that reproach serious diligence in Duty, as a needless thing.* If the business of our immortal soul, did not require great care and diligence, why doth *Paul* here enjoyn us to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise? Christians, 'tis your wisdom to know your work, and the time to do it. There's no trifling about eternity; now is the day for the things of your peace, let it not be hid from your eyes. It will be very sad when you are passing into the other World, to see that you have all your life time been sowing the wind.

Use 2. Examination, *Try whether you are redeemers of time, or not.* Reflect upon what I have said, and thy Conscience will tell thee, thou hast spent more of thy time in sin and vanity. How

fruitful are thy duties? Are thy hours for God? Do Time and Duty go hand in hand? Maist thou not cry out, many a time, *Diem perdidi!* daily I lose a day. Examine your selves, don't silence stop the mouth of Conscience; if so, it will cry aloud another day.

Let me ask you these few questions.

1. Have you seriously bewail'd the loss of time, and begg'd the pardon of it?

2. Have your souls sincerely closed with Jesus Christ, and freely and fully given up, and resigned your selves to him to be his for ever?

3. Do the great concerns of Gods glory, and your salvation, bear down all before them? Canst thou say, though I follow my Calling, and take care for my Family, yet I am most solicious about my everlasting condition? whether they be pleasures or profits, I can say, Pleasures of sin be gone, world stand by. There is a God to serve and honour; I have a soul must be sanctified and saved, I have a short time to redeem, I have a debt to pay, an account to give, a Sentence to receive, an Eternity

to

to live. This is not to be slighted; I must and will save my soul, Hell if most intolerable and eternal.

4. Will you now promise and stand to it, that for the future you will trade more for eternity, and get better evidences for Heaven? Go about the work of Faith and repentance speedily; lest death should call, and you not ready.

Use 3. Of Lamentation, *That Professors should be so far from redeeming of time, or of doubling their diligence, that they neglect their duty.* I may cry out with the Prophet, call for the mourning women, for who is not guilty in this kind? *Amos* 5. 16. Sirs, for this should our souls mourn in secret places; the serious consideration of which is enough to fetch blood from our hearts, and flood of tears from our eyes. How little care is taken in spending that well, which when it is gone, we have no hope it can be restored to us again. Do not you complain of the want of time, seeing you waste time. There are many poor frivolous excuses: the Servant will say, that he hath a hard, cruel Master; the wife complains of her wicked Husband, the Child of his Ungodly

Father; another, of the poverty of his Family; he can ſpare no time. Whoever pretends the want of time, let me tell thee, Thou haſt a carnal, dead, ſinful, ſlothful heart, the cauſe of all. Haſt thou not time for every other thing, namely, a time for eating, drinking, ſleeping, potting, piping, playing, and none for Heaven? Can you riſe early, go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulneſs, to get the meat that periſheth; and find no time for God and your Souls? will this excuſe thee another day, thou careleſs, ignorant, deluded ſoul? Your Corn, Cattel, your Sheep, your Swine, your Hawks, your Horſes, and Dogs are cared for; but for the better part, there's no care at all. Wilt thou tell the great and terrible Judge, at the laſt day, I would have been ſaved, but I had no time? There are many that eat their bread by the ſweat of their brows, that take time for their ſouls, who will be brought in as witneſſes againſt you at the laſt day. Will you ſquander away your time, and the days evil, and opportunities for your ſouls hardly come at? O conſider, it's high time to awake out of ſleep.

Exhor-

Use 4. You have heard what it is to redeem time, and how time must be redeemed. *Now let all resolve, without delay, to put this so necessary a Duty into practise.* Let young ones resolve upon it, and the middle-aged, with the hoary-heads. Tender unto thy God the cream and flower of thy age, and time, and think it not too soon. In things of far less moment, you are for haste and speed. If you were starving for want of bread, you would think every hour long, till you had a supply. If your bodies were tortured and tormented with pain and sickness, would you think that ease and health might come too soon? If a man were in the Sea near sinking, can a Boat come too soon? Or, can a condemned Malefactor receive his pardon too soon? hast thou lived without God, and Satan's Slave, and in danger of dropping into Hell, fifteen or twenty years, and canst thou get into Christ to secure thy immortal soul too soon? Hast thou not been the Devils too long already? Suppose thou hadst dyed in thy Christless state, where had

thy ſoul been? Is is not better to be the Lord's ſervant, then Satan's Slave? Ask the Godly man that hath made tryal, and he will tell thee. The ſooner thou art in a ſtate of Grace, the fitter thou wilt be for glory. Make ſpeed in thy work, do thy ſpiritual buſineſs; thy wages is ſure, and thou ſhalt be bleſſed. Conſider there was never any one repented (living or dying) that they were the Lords, and converted betimes.

And for you that have paſt the time of youth, in the ſatisfying youthful luſts, and liv'd, it may be, thirty, forty, or fifty years in a courſe of ſin and vanity, is it not more then time for you, to bethink your ſelves? In ſo many years you have made ſad work; who can tell how often you have offended, that have been profane Swearers, Drunkards, Lyars, Sabbath-breakers; ſo long, if you were certain of living ſo many years to come, yet the Devil, the World, and your Helliſh luſts, have had half your time. O let the time paſt ſuffice. Know your times are in Gods hands, *Pſal.* 31. 15. So that you are not certain of a day to come: therefore begin and make ſpeed in you work.

And

And for the gray-headed, againſt whom death hath raiſed his batteries, you can have but a few ſands in your glaſs, your departing hour cannot be far, your Candle is within the ſocket, and it may be is come to a ſtinking ſnuff: Do you not ſee the Keepers of the old rotten houſe begin to tremble, and the ſtrong men bow themſelves? Expect the next blaſt, the houſe to fall. If you that are leaning on your ſtaves, and looking through your ſpectacles, being ready to enter upon Eternity, don't mind your work immediately, Wo, wo be unto you for ever. If God ſhould work a ſpiritual Miracle, in converting and pardoning an old grey-headed Sinner, that hath been idle till the leventh hour, *Mat.*20.6. would it not be matter of amazement, and wonder to Men and Angels? For the Devil to be caſt out of poſſeſſion after he hath an Inhabitant threeſcore years, and more, for ſuch an one to be born again, would be ſtrange indeed. I have heard of an old man, who being really converted, not long before his death cauſed this to be written on his Tomb: *Here lyeth a very aged man, of Three Years Old*; He reckoned all his time and life before, as loſt, and

and worth nothing. Now that you (that have put off God, and hazarded your souls so long already) might lose no more time, consider these motives:

1. *The present time is Gods time, and must be yours.*
2. *God, the Righteous Judge, will reckon with you for your time.*
3. *You have solemnly promised to redeem it.*
4. *Men take and improve opportunity for other things.*
5. *Satan, your deadly enemy, is always busie, and will lose no time.*
6. *Saving-grace is an active and springing principle.*
7. *Time once had, and lost, cannot be recalled.*
8. *Cons. How they prize time, that have lost it.*
9. *God hath joyned Time and Duty together.*
10. *On this moment of Time, Eternity depends.*

Motive 1. Consider, *The present time is Gods, and it must be yours.* Don't you hear the Holy Ghost say, *It is now high time*

time to seek the Lord; and calling to you, *Come away, make speed? Hos.* 10. 12. Delayes and Lazineſs, are the two great Gulphs, in which multitudes of ſouls are drowned, and periſh. How many are now in Hell, that purpoſed and promiſed to turn to God (as you do) hereafter? O fear and tremble leſt it ſhould be your caſe. To enforce this, take theſe few hints.

1. The preſent time hath moſt Precepts; and Gods Commands, like warrants in the Kings name, muſt be obeyed on ſight thereof. We ſay, *Muſt is for the King*: If thou art young, read *Eccleſ.* 12. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, Pſal.* 95. 6. *Firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God, Mat.* 6. 33. *You muſt not ſtay long, Hoſ.* 13. 13. Bleſs God, and wonder the golden thread of precious time is ſpin'd out ſo long.

2. It hath moſt promiſes, and they are great and precious. *I will receive you*, ſaith the Lord. *They that ſeek me early ſhall find me.* The preſent time is an accepted time, in which God may be found, *Pſal.* 32. 6. Now God calls, *Heb.*

7.

3, 7. and you may come and welcome, *John* 6. 37. And it will be matter of unspeakable comfort to a man dying & looking into Eternity, to know he hath done the work for which he had his life and time.

3. You have the heſt examples. And 'tis our duty to imitate and follow them who are gone to Heaven before. Your dead Lord would loſe no time; *I muſt do the work of him that ſent me, while it is day.* When faithful *Abraham* was to offer his Son *Iſaac*, he made haſt, *Gen.* 22. 31. He roſe up early in the morning. *Mary Magdalan* came early in the morning to enquire after, and to ſee the Lord Jeſus, whom her ſoul loved, *Mark.* 16. 2.

Motive 2. *God the righteous Judge will reckon with you for your time.* Not onely for your health, wealth, ſtrength, parts, graces, memories, but for every minute of your time. If at the day of judgement we muſt give an account for every idle word, much more for ſo great a Talent, ſo rich a Treaſure as Time. A Heathen could ſay, that every wiſe man muſt *tam otii quam negotii rationem reddere*, give an account of his buſineſs, and of his idleneſs. You may, like

like fools, waste your time, neglect your duty, and stand out against the call of God; but it will cost your dear, *Eccl.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart chear thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, for all these things God will bring thee unto judgement.* The great Landlord of your time, is at great expence to continue it. Those Luminaries of Heaven, over your heads; and principally, the Prince of all the lights of Heaven, the Sun, that glorious and mighty Gyant, the Prince and Crown of all corporal Creatures, do tire, and waste (as it were their Celestial vigour, to beget and give Time. Time is so rich a Jewel, that God would have one man value it to another. If one man had hurt another, he was to pay both for his cure and loss of time, *Exod.* 21. 18, 19. So must you at the great day of account, for all your time, for every Sermon you have heard, for every Sabbath and Sacrament you have had all your days.

Motive 3. *You have all promised to redeem your time.* The Vows of *Jehovah* are upon you. Say with *David*, *I will pay my Vows.*

Vow. If the Godly man will perform his promiſe to his hurt, *Pſal.* 15. 4. Much more ſhould you for your profit. Take the Counſel of the Wiſe Man, *Eccleſ.* 5. 4, 5. *When thou voweſt a vow unto God, defer not to pay it: pay that which thou haſt vowed: better it is that thou ſhould not vow, then to vow and not pay.* How often you have engaged your ſelves to leave your known ſins, and to live ſoberly, and righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent World, let Conſcience witneſs. If you that have reſolved to read, pray, ſanctifie the Sabbath, *&c.* ſhould ſtill waſte and triſle away the time, it will not only be a breach of promiſe; but a ſin againſt light, for which thy heart will reproach thee; *and if thine heart condemn thee, God is greater then thine heart, and knoweth all things,* 1 *John* 3. 20. Remember the promiſes thou didſt make at ſuch a Sacrament, or when ſtruck at the heart by ſuch and ſuch a Sermon, or when death was at thy Family, or thy ſelf near unto it; and defer not to perform thy Covenant: God, who is a God of truth, will not be mocked; and that you ſhall know ere it be long. *Jeptha* would perform his vow to God; *I have,*

ſaid.

ſaid he, *opened my mouth unto the Lord, I cannot go back*, *Judg.* 11. 34, 35. *Herod*, for his Oath ſake, murdered *John* the *Baptiſt*, *Matth.* 14. 9, 10. How many times haſt thou engageſt to dedicate and devote thy ſelf to God and his Service? therefore ſay, *Lord, for my promiſe ſake, I will ſacrifice my ſelf, and become thine, redeeming my time for thy glory, and mine own Salvation.*

Motive 4. Conſ. *Men take and improve opportunities for other things.* The fitteſt and beſt time is taken for buying, ſelling, plowing, ſowing, and gathering into Barns; and eſpecially in evil and hard times. Men will riſe early, run, ride, and labour, in the very fire, as the Prophet ſpeaketh. *Redeeming the time*, 'tis a Metaphor taken from Merchants, that will be early in the Market, leſt the opportunity of buying the beſt Commodities ſhould be loſt. The Proverb is, *that Time and Tide, ſtay for no man*; and that *we muſt make Hay while the Sun ſhineth.* There's none but the ſluggard will ſleep in Harveſt; the diligent Husband-man will not loſe a day then. Chriſtians, in this great affair of your precious, immortal and never-dying ſouls, do

as

as men about other things: Millers and Marriners obſerve and improve every gale of wind; yea, the Stork in the Heaven, the Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow, know and obſerve the time of their coming, *Jer.* 8. 7. They that ſay, to day or to morrow we will go into ſuch a City, and buy, and get gain, *Jam.* 4. 2. will as we ſay, turn every ſtone, and loſe no time to buy a good bargain, to make a rich purchaſe, and ſhall we redeem our time, and make the beſt of our ſpiritual markets, to make proviſion for our ſouls, that are more worth then all the world?

Motive 5. *Satan, that Enemy, and grand Soul-deluder, is always buſie.* He is an active Devil, and he loveth to find us idle. Chriſtians, this old Serpent is never more at work, then when we are idle: for idleneſs layeth a man open to all his Helliſh Snares and temptations, and then if temptations come, you are out of Gods way; and if Satan find you on his ground, he will be too hard for you. The Apoſtle tells us he goeth about, and ſtill offers temptations for the waſting of our time. This roaring Lyon hath a large circuit; for ever ſince he

he was caſt out of Heaven, he hath been going to and fro in the Earth, and walking up and down in it, *John* 1. 7. His grand deſign is to devour, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. This black Prince loves to prey upon precious ſouls; the ſoul being that ſweet morſel he is ſtill gaping at. This Adverſary hath his ſeveral walks, he is in the Shop, in the Market, in the Street, in the Chamber, in the Cloſet, and every where where ſin is, and he is alſo in the Congregation among the Aſſemblies of the Saints, when they are about ſpiritual ſervice. When *Joſhua* the High-Prieſt ſtood before the Lord, Satan was ſtanding at his right hand to reſiſt him, *Zech.* 3. 1. This deadly enemy was with Chriſt, and his Diſciples at the Paſsover, for there he entred into *Judas*, *John* 13. 26, 27. Therefore, Chriſtians, we have need to work and watch too. The devil that hates you and all mankind, doth beſtir himſelf; he goeth forth into the broad way of prophaneneſs, and there he tenders and tempts men with ſenſual objects, and he entreth in the by-path of error, appearing as an Angel of light, and enticeth wanton wits to ſuck down the poyſon of his damnable doctrine. And

when

when once he hath injected his poyson into the head, how much time is spent in writing and disputing to defend his delusions? We read, that it was while men slept, this enemy (Satan) came and sowed Tares among the Wheat, *Matth.* 13. 25. 39. He is a working, busie Devil, never at leisure, but is always spreading his Baits, and casting his Snares and Nets to catch souls. Therefore be ye sober, vigilant, and watch unto prayer, and employ this talent of precious time well. Idleness is Satans Shop and the Mother of Mischief. *David* was at leisure, and on the roof of his house, when Satan prevailed by that sad temptation, 2 *Sam.* 11. 3. Therefore set God alwayes before you, keep in his way, and be doing your duty; that you may be kept from his fiery darts The flying Bird is seldom shot. The cautious, diligent, active soul is most secure.

Motive 6. *Time once gone cannot be recalled.* Time past, is gone for ever; Time present (if we may so call it) is going; future Time is most uncertain; neither Men or Angels can hinder, or stop it; turn, or bring

bring it back again. If opportunities be not now taken, they may never be had. Be good husbands of your time, and work now, or you may never work. Time's redemption, may be your salvation, therefore follow and improve the light, before darkness overtake you. You all know that yesterday, or the last hour, will never come again. If thou hadst as much treasure in thy custody or power, as the whole world is worth, it cannot purchase one minute of time past. You that are old, may as easily call back your youth, or become young again, as recover any part of this precious time *Luke* 19. 42.

Motive 7. *The nature of saving-Grace, is working and springing up*, which turneth all the powers and faculties of the Soul Heaven-ward. Such is the activity and vigour of this gracious nature, that it will bring a man to a *What wilt thou have me to do? Acts* 9. 6. *Ephes.* 2. 10. 'Tis not a lazy and languid thing, but full of life and power. The state of sin in Scripture, is described by death and darkness, which are a cessation and privation of life, and light, and motion: and the state of Grace is described

described by life, *Eph.* 2. which is powerful, and most vivacious, like the Sword of the Lord, and *Gideon*, doing great things. It is no wonder to see the men of the world, that are born after the flesh, to be dull, sluggish and unactive. But you that have a Divine Nature, and a Spirit of life and power in your hearts, should be diligent and laborious, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. *Rom.* 8. 2. This living principle of Grace, made the holy Apostle, who excited others to redeem their time, so to employ his Talent; the Grace of God in him, made him labour more then they all, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. The streams of grace that flow into the Soul, are called Rivers of Living Water, *John* 7. 31. and a Well of water springing up unto eternal life, *John* 4. 14. So that Christians have greater advantage of doing good, and of living to Gods glory. Therefore stir up the grace of God that is in you, cast off slothfulness, and put on diligence; and laying aside every weight, rejoyce (as the Son) to run the Race that is set before you.

Motive 8. Consider, *How highly they prize time, that have lost it. and are come to the end of it; and who, with the loss of time,*

time, have loſt themſelves. We have many dreadful Examples that ſtand as ſo many Sea-marks, to warn us to take heed.

The poor Jews were utterly undone by it. The Lord only knowns how many of them are now in flames, that ſuffer the vengeance of Eternal Fire, for not improving the day of Grace, *Luke* 19. 42. *Matth.* 23. 37. The fooliſh Virgins having loſt the opportunity of buying Oyl, came too late to the door. And *Eſau* ſtaid too long to get the bleſſing. Moſt do things when it is too late. Men go to bed late, riſe late, go to Market late, come to Church late, and make peace with God when it is too late. The old *Iſraelites* marched towards *Canaan* when is was too late, and ſo loſt that good Land. O how dreadful will mercy ſlighted and time loſt be, to the awakened ſoul, when it comes to dye, ſeeing it ſelf in a Chriſtleſs ſtate! It was a ſpeech once of a woman in terror of Conſcience, when divers Miniſters and others came to her in a way of comforting her; ſhe looks with a ghaſtly countenance upon them, and gives them this anſwer, *Call back time again; if you can, call*

call back time again, then there may be hopes for me: but time is gone. Another great Lady upon her death-bed, cryed out, *All too late, all too late; a World of Wealth for an inch of Time.* Another Gentlewoman, (of whom I have heard) who was wont to employ this precious Talent of Time, in playing at Cards, and such like Games, coming from her sport late in the night, finding her Waiting-maid (that was religious) reading in a good Book, and casting her eyes in the Book over the Maids shoulder, speaks these words, or to this effect: *Thou poor melancholly soul! what always reading, and spending thy time thus! wilt thou take no comfort in thy life?* The Gentlewoman retiring to her Chamber went to bed. The maid lodging in the same room, perceived her Mistress under great disquiet and perturbation of Spirit, sighing and groaning bitterly. The Servant hearing of it, several times called to her to know the reason she could not sleep: the Maid urging of her, at last she cryed out & said, *I read this word* ETERNITY *in thy Book, which hath so pierced my heart, that I believe I shall never sleep more, till I have a better assurance of mine Eternity.* Another

ther wanton Lady, that hath wasted her time in sensuallity, who dyed not many weeks past, told her vicious Mother, standing by her bed-side, That *it was too late to speak of God to her; for you have undone me, and I am going to Hell before, and you will certainly come after.* It is common with men dying and going into the other World, sadly to bewail the loss of time. When they fear Mercy is going, Patience expiring, and the time respited for repentance, over, then they prize opportunities at another rate. And O what would the damned in Hell give to be admitted into the World, if they might but enjoy one day, or hour, to deliver themselves from that dreadful place of torment, *Luke* 16. 27, 28.

Motive 9. Consider, *God hath joyned Time and Duty together:* that in two respects.

1. In respect of Assistance.
2. In respect of Acceptance.

1. God hath joyn'd Time and Duty together, in respect of Assistance: and what Infinite Majesty hath joyned, must not by any means be separated. Work, and Time, Opportunity and Duty; must go

together. *Adam* had his work in Paradice before the fall. And ſecond *Adam* was always in action, to the end of his days; His meat and drink was to do the will of his Father. *Nullus mihi per otium dies exit*, I have no day for idleneſs, was the language of a Heathen. Chriſtians, do your work in ſeaſon, and you ſhall have Aſſiſtance. God's opportunity is as wind to the Sails, or as Oyl to the Wheels, which will make you glide through difficult duties with much facility. If we work in God's time, God will work with us, and we ſhall be workers together with him. Goſpel-time is in order to Goſpel-work; ſpiritual Opportunities are appointed and continued for ſpiritual Duties. The work of faith, repentance, mortification of ſin, the plucking out right eyes, the chopping off right arms, fighting and wreſtling with the Powers and Prince of darkneſs, are exceeding difficult: but God whoſe arm is potent, will give power: and how eaſily will great work or ſervice be done, when there is great aſſiſtance in the doing of it? A burden that is too heavy for one to lift, by the help of another will come up eaſie. This *Paul* witneſſeth, *Phil.* 4. 13. *I can do all things through Chriſt*

Christ which strengtheneth me. The feeble *Jews*, by the help of *Jehovah*, raised the Walls of *Jerusalem* from its very rubbish, and that in spight of all opposition, *Neh.* 3. 2, 3. and 6. 15. they plying the work, the Lord was with them by his great power and strong hand: they made their prayer unto God, when strength was almost decayed, and laboured in the work from the rising of the morning, till the Stars appeared; and so the Wall was finished. Let time be redeemed, and then a great deal of work may be done in a little time: God's opportunity will make believing and repenting easie, *Luke* 19. 6. *Acts* 2. 37. 41. *Acts* 16. 14. 34. O therefore while it is day, work out your Salvation; for *it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure, Phil.* 2. 12, 13.

2. God hath joyned Time and Duty, in respect of Acceptance. Every time is not an accepted time, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. The *Israelites* that refused to march up to *Canaan* at God's command, lost their opportunity, and afterward he would neither *assist* them nor *accept* them. If thou stayest till God's time be past and gone, art

thou ſure God will accept thee hereafter? There is a time when God will not be found, will not be ſpoken withal, *Iſa.* 55. 6. *Eſau* ſought the bleſſing with tears, and it was denied him, *Heb.* 12. 17, *Prov.* 1. 29. Do not ſay, what need ſo much ſpeed? what need ſo much improving of time, ſo much reading, hearing, praying, preaching? but reſolve upon thy now or never.

Motive 10. Laſtly, Conſider, *That on the preſent moment of time eternity depends.* This deep and heart-affecting Meditation ſhould even ſwallow us up, and cauſe us to haſten unto our work. Let go Time's opportunity, and you will certainly be ruin'd to all Eternity. The Painter being asked why he was ſo exact in drawing his Lines, anſwered, *I paint for Eternity.* Conſider, that thou muſt believe and repent for Eternity, hear and pray for Eternity, fear, love, obey for Eternity. A work of *infinite moment*, depends on a *moment of Time.* This day thou mayeſt throw thy laſt Caſt for Eternity. This ſwift Poſt will not ſtop, no not for a moment. Secure ſoul! doſt thou ſee Eternity before thee, even at thy door, and

that

that there is but a ſtep between thee and an endleſs ſtate, and wilt thou not be more induſtrious for thy Soul, and Heaven? If a man were to run or wreſtle for his Life, or for a Crown, or Kingdom, how would he ſtrain, and ſtrive, and that with all his might? If a man were to go over Sea for his life, and had but one gale of wind in his Life-time, would he come to the water-ſide and loſe it; If a Malefactor had but a day appointed him to ſue out his pardon, would he not improve it? This is all our caſes: God hath given us but a day to work; when the day is ended, it will be night for ever, *Luk.* 19. 19, 42. *John* 9. 4. Now it may be, Chriſt is at the door, offering thee help, open to him, leſt he withdraw, and come no more. Its probable the ſpirit of Life and Power, ſtriveth to turn thee to God, O refuſe not to comply with it, leſt the Spirit ſerve thee, as *Samuel* did *Saul*, that came no more to him, 1 *Sam.* 15. 35. I ſhall conclude the Motives with the words of the *Pſalmiſt, to day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, leſt God ſwear in his wrath, that you ſhall not enter into his reſt, Pſal.* 95. 7, 11.

Now if thou art resolved to put this duty into practice; through the help of Heaven, speedily and diligently observe these Directions.

Directions for the redeeming of Time.

1. *Take heed and beware of those things which rob you of your time.*

2. *Labour to convince your selves of the worth of time, and value it accordingly.*

3. *Set apart a considerable portion of time for the most secret duties.*

4. *Cast and compute your time.*

5. *Maintain a holy fear upon thy heart of coming to the end of time, before thy work be done.*

Direct. 1. First, *Take heed of those things which rob you of your time.* Now the thieves that will rob you of this exceeding rich Jewel, are these six, against which watch as for thy life.

1. *Vain Thoughts.*
2. *Worldly Cares.*
3. *Unnecessary Visits.*
4. *Unprofitable Discourse.*
5. *Excessive indulging of the outward man.*
6. *Un-*

6. *Unlawful or immoderate recreations.*

1. *Vain Thoughts.* These are secret and subtile Thieves, that insensibly rob us of our time every day, and in every duty; vain impertinent and wicked thoughts like *Pharaoh's* Frogs, creep and crowd in upon us, and thrust out good thoughts; so that we cannot keep our mind steddy and compos'd. *Solomon* saith, *Prov.* 17. 24. *The eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth*; so are our thoughts gadding, wandring up and down here and there and every where. These evil thoughts spring and rise from within us, as naturally as sparks from the fire, *Gen.* 6. 5. *Matth.* 15. 19. *Out of the heart proceedeth evil thoughts.* And they follow us continually into every place, and in every service, as the Birds on *Abraham's* Sacrifices, which *Abraham* did drive away. They must not Lodge, *Jerem.* 4. 14. Though we cannot hinder the Fowls from flying in the Air, or over our heads, we may hinder them from pitching on our heads. Holy *David* had vain thoughts, but he hated them, *Psal.* 119. 113. There is not a minute, but many thoughts pass from us, as, in a minute, sands do in an Hour-glass, *Psal.* 94. 19. Christians, con-

ſider how much of that time is loſt, which you ſpend in holy duties, by vain thoughts; when we ſhould draw nigh to God, our hearts, by our thoughts, ſteal away. And there are but a few awakened tender ſpirits, truly ſenſible of this intrinſical ſecret evil; though much of a Chriſtian's duty, and the very inwards of Religion, lies in obſerving the thoughts, and in watching the heart. Therefore above all keeping, keep thy heart, *Prov.* 4. 23. and take heed to thy ſpirit, *Mal.* 2. 15, 16.

2. *Worldly Cares* are great waſters of our precious time. The moſt do mind Earthly things, *Phil.* 3. 19. Men heads, hearts and thoughts, are ſo intent about the things that periſh, that they do hardly entertain a ſerious thought of God and Eternity, all the day. God is not in all their thoughts. They that are the fleſh, do mind the things of the fleſh, *Rom.* 8. 5. and not only the children of this World, but Profeſſors themſelves, are ſo eager and vehement in the purſuit of this poor Earth, that almoſt all their time and ſtrength is ſpent about it. And while men are ſo careful and ſolicious about many things, and in a very crowd and hurry of buſineſs, it is impoſſible for them to redeem

deem time for God and their Souls. As ſoon as their eyes are open, and the things of the World ſtand as ſo many Suitors, to invite and draw them. Some have their hearts ſo over-charged and ſurfeited with the Cares and fears of this evil world, that their abundance will not ſuffer them to ſleep, *Luke* 21. 4. *Eccleſ.* 5. 12. Now when it is thus, Opportunities are loſt, Souls are neglected, Holy duties omitted, or if uſed, they are very unſucceſsful, *Ezek.* 33. 31. *Math.* 13. 22. Therefore take heed of the world, ſo great a devourer of our time.

3. *Unneceſſary viſits*, are great waſters of our time: of which you muſt take heed, it being no mark of Godlineſs but the contrary. The wiſe man ſpeaking of the vicious and vertous Woman, giveth them this different Character, *viz.* the one, *her feet abideth not in her Houſe*, *Eccl.* 7. 11. the other *looketh well to the wayes of her houſhold, and eateth not the bread of idleneſs*, *Prov.* 31. 27. And we read of ſome, that wandred about from houſe to houſe, being *idle Tatlers, and buſie-bodies, ſpeaking things which they ought not*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 13. How many do trifle away the time in going from houſe to houſe? to whom

it may be ſaid, as *Pharaoh* to the oppreſſed *Iſraelites*, *Ye are idle, ye are idle.* Let that time you have to ſpare from your Calling and Families, be ſpent in Reading, Prayer, or other Religious exerciſes: and in all your Viſits, intend and deſign the doing of good, or the receiving of good; and not the paſſing away of this precious time. When your friends or neighbours are ſick, and under the hand of God, go to them, and give them counſel for their ſouls, *Rom.* 15. 2.

4. *Unprofitable Diſcourſe* robbeth us of much time. Some employ their Tongues in telling fabulous or filthy ſtories; others in diſcourſing of Parties and Opinions, and in talking of the Faults and Miſcarriages of other men. Some about the Times, and enquiring after News. Thus did the men of *Athens*, who ſpent their time in nothing elſe, but either to tell, or to hear ſome new thing, *Acts* 17. 21. And the moſt, when they come together, paſs away the time in diſcourſing of the World, and the concerns of it. But let Chriſtians, when they converſe, imitate their Lord; the words that proceeded out of his mouth, were gracious words: *Walk in wiſdom toward them that art without, redeeming the time.*

time. Let your ſpeech be always with Grace, ſeaſoned with Salt, that you know how you ought to anſwer every man; *Col.* 4. 5, 6.

5. *Exceſſive indulging the outward man.* Much of our time is ſpent in making proviſion for the fleſh, *Rom.* 13. laſt. Some hours are taken up every day in providing for the belly, to pleaſe the Pallate; and ſome at their Tables take up much time. Others to gratifie a proud fancy, much time is waſted in decking and trimming the body. There are thoſe that ſpend more time in looking into a glaſs, then upon their knees in praying to God. A godly Miniſter coming to a Gentlewomans houſe to Dinner, where he waited from ten a clock till one, all the while ſhe was dreſſing, burſt out in weeping, to think that ſhe ſhould ſpend ſo much time in *Trimming*, and he ſo little in *Praying*. Alſo, exceſſive Sleep doth devour a great part of our ſhort life and time. When we ſhould be on our knees in our Cloſet, we are in our beds, or on our Couches. Others waſte their pretious time in Ale-houſes, and Tavers, and Brothel-houſes, from day to day, God's day being not exempted. Againſt

ſuch

ſuch there is a dreadful Wo; *Wo unto them that riſe up early in the morning, that they may follow ſtrong drink; that continue until night, till Wine inflame them, Iſa.* 5. 11, 12.

6. *Unlawful or immoderate Recreations*, are the occaſions of great expence of time. Recreation (not to be uſed but as Phyſick, in caſe of need) is an ingroſſer and waſter of our time, that's dear and precious. Many are ſo exceſſive in it, as if they were ſent into the World to do nothing but ſport. What time is ſpent is Carding, Dicing, Dancing, Interludes, Stage-plays, Bear and Bull-baitings, Hunting, Hawking, and in reading Romantick Books? which, for Men and Women profeſſing the Goſpel, are not of good report, *Phil.* 4. 8. The turning of the Bible or of ſome good Book, is more becoming a Chriſtian, then turning a pair of Cards, a Game ſo much accuſtomed by the Prophane, and an occaſion of much ſin. Theſe things will cauſe bitterneſs and horror at laſt; they are Honey to the Fanſie, but a ſting to the Conſcience. Conſider which will afford moſt comfort dying; *Item*, ſo many days in recreation, or ſo many days in humiliation;

liation; so many hours in prayer, or so many hours in playing at Cards; so many hours in vain filthy discourse, or so many hours in serious and Heavenly conference; *Item*, so many Sabbaths in reading, hearing and singing of *Psalms*, or so many Sabbaths spent in eating, drinking, walking, or worse. Holy *Bradford* counted that hour lost, wherein he had not done some good. *Titus Vespasian* was wont to say, *Diem perdidi*, I have lost a day.

Direct. 2. *Set a due estimate upon this precious Jewel of Time*, that your hearts may be so truly tender, as to make conscience of wasting of it. A Godly Minister was wont to say when he saw the morning clear and serene, *'Tis pity this day should be lost.* O value your time; reckon more of one Sabbath, then of the best Fair or Market that ever thou wasted in all thy life. Set upon the now day of Grace, the price of Eternity. I have told you already the damned in Hell (if it might be) would give a World for one opportunity to make peace with God.

Direct. 3. *Set apart some considerable portion of time, for the most secret duties.*

1. For

1. For ordinary ſecret prayer and meditation, ſet ſome time apart in the morning and evening of every day; and do not catch and ſnatch at praying-times. Many ſerve the world and the fleſh all day, and put off God with a few words or ſleepy prayers at night. Prayer is the breath of the new Creature, and the ſign of ſpiritual life, *Act.* 9. 6. Chriſtians let your prayers be ſecret, ſincere, fervent, conſtant. The way to Heaven (ſaid a good man) is through the Cloſet, and they that have been eminent in Piety, have been excellent in Prayer. Holy *David* would not let a morning paſs without prayer, *Pſal.* 5. 3. Yea, three times a day he was at this bleſſed duty, *Pſa.* 55. 17. It was his Element and conſtant employment, *Pſal.* 109. 4. Your prayer muſt be fervent if it be effectual. Prayer without fervency, is as a Bullet without Powder, or as a Bird without wings, that cannot mount up into the Air. Holy fire muſt be put to the daily Sacrifice. God anſwers by Fire. He that looks upon the heart, regards the manner of your Prayers, more then the number of your prayers. Cold, ſlight mumbling over a few Petitions, either out of cuſtom, or to ſtop the mouth of conſcience, will

will not prevail, *Psa.* 25. 1. *Isa.* 26. 9. *Jam.* 5. 15. Christians, the time that you spend with God in secret, is the sweetest time, and best improved. Therefore if thou lovest thy life, be in love with prayer. Resolve to spend some time with God in private every day.

2. Extraordinary private Fastings, is a duty very necessary, and practised but by a few. Soul-afflicting dayes between God and a man's self, would though grace, be much for spiritual advantage, Husbands should mourn apart, and their Wives apart, *Zech.* 12. 12, 13. Fasting-days will be Soul-fatting days, *Acts* 10. 30. and *Blessed are they that mourn*, *Mat.* 5. 4.

3. The third private duty is self-examination. When thou art alone, ask thy self these questions.

1. Is it most certain, that I am in a state of Grace?

2. Is Grace thriving? Doth my inward man prosper?

3. Do I live in no known sin against Conscience, *Psal.* 19. 1. 28. and exercise my self unto Godliness?

4. Do I make conſcience of redeeming time, ſo as to joyn time and duty togetogether? A Precious Servant of the Lord was wont to ſay, if a man could anſwer to theſe two Queſtions, he need not to fear? Firſt, *Am I Gods child?* Secondly, *Am I in Gods way?* Pſal. 119. 94.

Direct. 4. *If you would redeem your time, compute your time.* Pray thou mayeſt do it, *Pſal.* 90. 12. *Pſal.* 39. 4. Numbring the People was *David's* ſin, but numbring his days a duty. 'Tis common for men to number their Sheep, their Cattel, Houſes, Lands, Wares, Money, but to number our days, is a rare kind of numbring: for the neglect of which, what arears are we fallen into, with the great Land-lord of our time? Chriſtians, divide your time into parcels, and conſider how little God hath; how much time was ſpent in thy Infancy and Child-hood, before thou hadſt the uſe of reaſon, how much is ſpent in our Callings and Employments about the world, how much in Eating and Drinking and unprofitable diſcourſe, beſides all this, half, or more, is ſpent in ſleeping: ſo that in the work of God, and about our immortal ſouls, we employ but a very little.

There-

Therefore 'tis more then time to redeem it.

Direct. 5. *Maintain always a holy fear upon thy heart of coming to the end of time before thy work be done.* Live continually in an expectation of your great changes. Buy Sell, Converſe, Read, Pray, Hear, and do all as dying men, and paſſing to receive the recompence of endleſs Joy or Wo. Chriſtians, if you would work while it is day; If you would glorifie God on Earth, If you would ſecure and eternally ſave your immortal ſouls; If you would not be a prey to the Prince of Darkneſs; If you would ſtand with comfort before the Lord Jeſus, at his dreadful Bar; If you would not ſpend your days without hope: Ariſe therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with you.

Deus

Deut. 32. 29.

O that they were Wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.

IT is always seasonable to insist on such subjects as direct us to speak of another world, especially in time of great Sickness and Mortality, in which thousands of souls night and day have been crowding into Eternity (witness the late dreadful Plague in sixty five.) I therefore made choice of this serious, and heart-wakening subject, that drowsie, secure souls might be awakened to a deep consideration of the world to come. The whole Chapter is stiled the Song of *Moses*, his Swan-like Song, or Song before his death, the dying words of that eminent faithful servant of God; and if the words of a dying man are to be regarded, how much the words of a dying *Moses*. This *Moses* being ready to go into the other world, composeth this

song,

song, of which the Text is apart; and dying words are weighty, and make the deepest impression.

This song is partly *Narratory.* *Minatory.* *Promissory.*

In the Narrative you have

1. A Narration of the infinite greatness, and most glorious attributes of the God of *Israel*, introduced with a pathetical and awakening acclamation: *Give ear O ye Heavens, and I will speak; and hear O Earth the words of my mouth.*

2. We have a Narration of their corruption, ingratitude, and rebellion, *verse* 5, 6. *They have corrupted themselves, they are a perverse and crooked generation: do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise.* Notwithstanding the remarkable favours, and rare indulgence of God toward them, yet *they forsook him, provoked him to jealousie with strange Gods, and sacrificed to Devils, and not unto God, Vers.* 16. 17. Because of which he threatens. *To hide his face from them*, then which nothing more bitter to the soul, Ver. 20.

2. To

2. To inflict variety of sore temporal judgements upon them, then which nothing more burthensome to the body. *I will heap mischief upon them, I will spend mine Arrows upon them; they shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction, the sword without, and terrour within, shall destroy both the young man, and the Virgin, with a man of gray hairs; for a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest Hell.* And *Vers.* 27. God gives the reason why he would not utterly destroy them, and make a full end of them. *Were it not that I feared the wrath of the envying, &c.*

And now the words of the Text seem to be the Application of the whole, *O that they would consider their latter end.*

You may look upon these words as it were a Mount cast up, by which the people of *Israel* might take a view of things to come, and have a prospect of what should befal them in their latter end. *O that they were wise!* to be wise is opposit to that brutishness, *ver.* 28. They were a Nation void of counsel, for they wanted the right exercise of reason, and that wisdom which is from above, to observe, and improve the

the gracious providences and dispensations of God.

That they would consider: Consideration is a fixed act of the understanding or mind, in order to practice; for doing and considering are frequently joyned together, *Judg.* 18. 14. *Now therefore consider what ye have to do, Heb.* 10. 27. *Let us consider one another to provoke unto love, and good works.* The same thing is variously expressed in Scripture, *viz.* to look narrowly upon a thing, to call to mind, to know and consider in ones heart, to call things to remembrance, to commune with a mans heart, *Psal.* 77. 5, 6.

Their latter end: By which we are not only to understand those tremendous, and desolating judgements that should surprize them in this world, but to remember the great things of the other; as also old age, death, the grave, eternity, death with its antecedents, concomitants and consequences.

The words contain a pathetical Option or wish, *O that they were wise!* In which observe,

1. *The person wishing, viz.* the most great and gracious God.

2. *The*

2. *The thing desired*, and that is Divine Wisdom: a Jewel indeed, a price far above Rubies.

3. *The person for whom God thus desireth*, *viz.* for *Israel*, a people nigh unto the Lord, and yet a bruitish inconsiderate, and unwise people. O that they were wise, &c.

4. *What this wisdom is, or wherein it doth consist*, *viz.* in the consideration of their latter end.

The Doctrines observable from the words are these.

Doct. 1. *That God doth earnestly desire, and long for the good of a people.*

Doct. 2. *That an inconsiderate people are a foolish and unwise people.*

Doct. 3. *That want of serious consideration is incident not only to the prophane, but to men professing God and Godliness:* The *Israelites* were the onely Church of God then in the World, and yet they were not wise to understand and consider their latter end.

I shall not handle these apart, but speak to the chief scope and intent of the words in this one proposition.

Doct. *That it is a duty and matter of high concernment to consider our latter end.* O

that

that they were wiſe! that they would conſider, *viz.* practically conſider, and live always in the belief of the other world, ſo as to do up all their work while it is day. This ſeems to be the great import of the ſpirit of God in this Text.

Eternal ſouls, whatever eſcapeth your thoughts, this muſt not; this ſhould be your *vade mecum*; It ſhould riſe up with you, lye down with you, walk with you where-ever you go are. This *Moſes* himſelf, that precious and renowned ſervant of God deſir'd, ſeeing ſuch a dreadful mortality in the Wilderneſs, and ſo many ſad ſpectacles of Divnie wrath, *Pſal.* 90. 10. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wiſdom.* And as *Moſes* deſir'd it, ſo alſo holy *David*, *Pſal.* 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know my end, and the meaſure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am.* And *Solomon* ſets a *better* upon it, *Eccleſ.* 7. 2. *It is better to go to the Houſe of mourning, then to the Houſe of Feaſting: for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart.* And it is an Argument that men are dead, when at a Houſe of mourning they are not moved with compaſſion, to a due and deep conſideration of their doleful and dying condition.

I

I shall come now to show you what we are to consider, concerning our latter end; and O that it may take a deep impression upon all that shall read these plain truths.

Seriously consider and believe,

1. *That it is most certain that an end will be.* For whatsoever the Scriptures speak of Death, the Grave, and Hell, is an infallible Truth. You are to consider, that every man is mortal, must dye, and pass into the other World; and that in every one of your bodies there is an immortal, and never-dying soul; and that after these bodies have slept in the dust of the Earth, they shall live again; there shall be a resurrection of the just and unjust; and at the end of the World a Tribunal shall be set up, before which all the World shall be made to stand. And that as soon as your breath is gone, the spirit shall return to God that gave it, either to the Justice of God, or to the Mercy of God, to the place of joy, or to the place of torment.

Our transgression, natural constitution, with a statute Law of Heaven have brought

brought us under a necessity of dying? Where ever this Viper fastneth, it killeth certainly, though not suddenly; sin and death are twins, sin is the great murderer that let death into the world; *For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt dye*, Gen. 2. 17. That is, thou shalt become mortal. As soon as *Adam* had sinn'd, he (and we in him our representative) became subject or liable to death: Sin, like a mighty Monarch reign'd from *Adam* to *Moses*: a Malefactor cast at the Bar, is dead in Law, though he be repriev'd for a time; *the Body* (sayes the Apostle) *is dead because of sin*: some dye in the womb, some in their infancy, some in their youth, & they that live longest, dy at last: Death never hurts a man, but with his own Weapon; it always holds Sin in us, and *the sting of death is sin*. And where ever you meet it, or see it, you may say of it, as *Ahab* to the Prophet, *hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* Death, and every death, is the fruit of sin, death temporal, death Spiritual, and death Eternal: *The soul that sins shall dye*, *Ezek.* 18. 20. *The wages of sin is death*, *Rom.* 6. 23. Our natural constitution rendreth us obno-

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xious to dissolution; our flesh is not the flesh of stone, or of brass, but frail and mouldring dust, to which, as to our Centre, we must return, *Gen.* 3. 19. *Dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return*, *Eccles.* 3. 20. *All go to one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again*, *Heb.* 9. 27. *It is appointed for man once to dye.* *Job* 14. 5. *His days are determined, the number of his moneths are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.* No shield, or Buckler can fortifie against this King of terrors; impartial death (the great Leveller) knows no faces, and therefore none can be exempted. If faithfulness might challenge impunity from death, then *Moses* might have been excus'd; if beauty, then *Absalem*: if strength, then *Sampson*: if sincerity and piety, then *David*: if subtilty, then *Achitophel*: if magnanimity, then *Alexander*: if riches, then *Crœsus*: if wisdom, then *Solomon*: but one event happens to them all, so that when the fatal moment cometh, no ransom can be given, no art nor skill can keep us here. Sirs, were this Doctrine of the other would believed, it would have a greater impression upon our hearts: did we seriously consider of that future state of retribution, according

cording to our faith of which we must live or die, stand or fall to eternity, it would have a greater influence upon our lives.

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2. Consider, *That at your latter end, all things in this World will fail you, and take their leave of you for ever.* All your natural indowments, outward enjoyments, Parts, Parentage, Birth, Breeding, Wit, Wealth, Crowns, Kingdoms, Pearles, Diamonds, Houses, Lands, Wives, Children, Friends, when your breath is gone, all these are gone, *Prov.* 27. 24. *Riches are not for ever, neither doth a crown endure to all generations.* The glittering Sun of all outward glory will certainly set, which your own experience, and Scripture evidence doth clearly evince, *Riches have wings, and they fly away, Prov.* 23. 5. *The fashion of this world passeth away,* 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. *We brought nothing into this world; and 'tis certain we shall carry nothing out,* 1 *Tim.* 6. 7. If a man were possessed with as much of this World, as *Solomon* the great King of *Jerusalem*, who had great Magnificent Buildings, fruitful,

pleasant Vineyards, Gardens, Orchards, and Trees of all manner of fruits, variety of servants, possessions of great and small Cattel, heaps of Gold and Silver, peculiar Treasure of Kings, Musical Instruments, Men and Women singers, and whatsoever his eyes desir'd; yet when he takes a serious view of all things, he would say with him, *all is vanity*, and that a man hath no profit of all his labour which he taketh under the Sun, which made the wise man even to have life, *Eccles.* 2.

Since the fall, there is a curse upon the Creature, which indeed is deceiving, vexing, decaying, and all our outward comforts may be compared to *Pharaoh's* Hosts, and alive this hour, and the next drown'd and dead upon the Sea-shore, and though you judge they shall endure for ever, *Psal.* 49. 11. *Luke* 12. 19. They will deal by you as *Absalom's* Mule that left him in his greatest extremity. What woful miseries attend Wordly riches, in the getting keeping and parting with them? they are snares and thorns, plagues and Scorpions unto many; they pierce them thorow with many sorrows, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10.

Yet here men toyl, beat their brains,

weary

weary their bodies, tire their ſpirits, break their ſleep, perplex their thoughts, rack their conſciences, ingulf and drown themſelves in cares, endanger their ſouls (dreaming of nothing but perpetuity:) and when they have done all, like the Silk-worm, dye in their work: Nay, many a man ſurvives his own happineſs, which periſheth before he periſheth; and its the worſt of miſeries to outlive our own happineſs: therefore let not riches lighten your hearts, and prompt you to pride, which is too common.

This day the rich worlding ſang a *requiem* to his ſadly deluded ſoul, concluding he had much laid up, the night following his ſoul is required. *Haman* is to day the ſecond man in the Kingdom, but ſoon loſt all, and his life too. Now doth *Nebuchadnezzar* walk in his ſtately royal Palace of *Babel*, , priding himſelf in his outward pomp; but while the word was in his mouth, a voice came from Heaven, ſaying; *O King* Nebuchadnezzar, *to thee be it ſpoken, thy Kingdom is departed from thee*, *Dan.* 4. 29, 30, 31.

Jeruſalem this year is the Princeſs among the Provinces, the next year made tributary; and they that live delicately

are desolate, and embrace Dung-hills, *Lam.* 1. 1. and 4. 5. Yesterday *Job*'s Cattle might be numbred by thousands, and to morrow he is stript of all, and left naked. Neither is our age without a sad and dreadful instance (*viz.*) famous *London*, on the Lord's day standing, by *Wednesday* burnt and laid in ashes, and thousands of the Inhabitants houseless and harbourless; therefore if riches encrease, set not your hearts upon them; they are uncertain, cannot satisfie, cannot profit, will perish, and that for ever: O then, let those precious, dear, everlasting jewels, laid up in your mouldring, decaying, dying bodies, be cared for! *What can it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Mat.* 16. 26.

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3. Consider, *How soon all the present pleasures of sin will be gone, and leave nothing but a sting.* Old age, weakness, sickness, will make a great change in the whole outward man as to beauty, strength, natural vigor, liveness of senses, and all whereby a man might take any pleasure in

in the world, or in his luſt. When ſickneſs old age, deaths fore-runner cometh, it will make a ſtrange change in the moſt comely countenance; corporal comelineſs and beauty is ſoon ſtain'd, ſickneſs will not only fade it, but deface it: You that are endowed with comely proportion, ſparkling eyes, well-favouredneſs, amiableneſs of colours, of white and red, with ſtraitneſs agility of body, with a cheerful aſpect: when old age cometh, it will plow deep forrows in thoſe fair faces; and yet many (ignorant of their foul ſouls, and filthy hearts) are proud of their fair faces, and comely features; ſo that they grow wanton by reaſon of it, and to ſet out their beauty and whiteneſs of their skins (not being contented with Creators curious make) will add painting, patches, powdering, criſping, curlings, artificial hair, and what not? Know that old age will not onely whither your beauty (which is but skin deep) but [illegible] outward ſtrength, natural vigor, [illegible] ſenſes, and all whereby you may [illegible] worldly pleaſure.

Old age is *Solomon's* evil day, when the Sun, Moon and Stars will be darkned, the keepers of the Houſe tremble,

and the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease, and all the daughters of Musick shall be brought low, and fear shall be in the way; when the whole outward man is decayed, (*viz.*) eyes dim or dark, Ears deaf, Teeth rotten, Gums bare, Head bald, Breath corrupt, Hands and Feet weak and trembling; an evil day indeed, in which you shall find no delight in your former dalliances, for the Grashopper will be a burden, and desire shall fail, *Eccles.* 12. But the beauty of Grace withers not under the greatest declinings of natural beauty; for grace is the Oyl in the Lamp that never goeth out, but shineth more and more. *The Kings Daughter is all glorious within, Psal.* 45. Godliness, which is Gods likeness, casts a lustre that is very lovely in the sight of God and Man. *Thou art all fair, my Dove and there is no spot in thee.*

Sinners! you that now taste the sweet of Sin, rejoyce to do wickedly, that spend your time in riotous Drunkenness, Chambers of wantonness, lye upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch your selves on your Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, that chant to the sound of the viol, that drink Wine in Bowls, that are not

grieved

grieved for the afflictions of *Joseph*, that put far away the evil day; Know, that the fire of sin will burn, and that your sweet morsels are but for a moment; those sweet morsels and delicate dainties will cost your dear.

Hear now this, you that are given to pleasure, that feast your selves in doing evil; 'tis but a little time, and you will see and say, that all your delights, hopes, joys, are past and gone, and that you shall never see or taste them more, only the gravel, gall, guilt and sting will remain. You that love this Hellish banquet of sin (the stoln Waters that are sweet, and bread eaten in secret that is pleasant) don't know that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of Hell. *Prov.* 9. 17, 18. Sin is a sweet poyson, pleasant in the acting, but bitter in the end: *For the soul that sinneth shall dye. Ezek.* 13. 20. And will you spare it, and keep it still within your mouth? hide it under your tongue, untill it becometh the gall of Asps within you, *Job* 20. 12, 13. Consider also, that your secret wickedness committed in the dark, in corners, that is mask'd and close kept, is known to God.

The infinite Holy, and heart ſeaching God marks them, *Job* 10. 1[illegible] *Hoſ.* 7. 2. Watcheth them, *Job* 14. 16. Sealeth them, they are down among his Treſures, *Deut.* 32. 34. and they will find you out, *Num.* 32. 23. (If not truly and deeply repented of and pardoned) they will lye down with you in the Grave, and follow you into the other World, and meet you at Gods dreadful Bar, and be diſcovered in the ſight of the whole world; evil ſhall purſue the Sinner: This evil thing, and bitter (bred in the womb, not buried in the grave, nor extinguiſhed by the fire of Hell) ſhall purſue the ſinner unto Hell. Sinners, this is moſt certain, unrepented ſins will never leave you, but lye down and riſe with you, your bones are full of the ſins of your youth, which ſhall lye down with you in the duſt, *Job* 20. 11. Sin is a bad bed fellow, and a worſe grave-fellow, and if it ſleep with you, it will awake with you, when the dreadful Trumpet ſhall ſound, *Ariſe ye dead and come to judgement*: The damned in Hell have all their ſins about them; that which was the cauſe of their being caſt into Hell, will be their everlaſting companion there; and will you take theſe Vipers and Scorpions into

into your bosom, that will be always gnawing upon your hearts? Know this, your posting Sun of all sinful sensual delights, will set in the dreadful Ocean of endless, easeless, and remedilesss sorrow.

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4. Consider, *That only which is eternal, will stand you in stead when you come to dye,* (*viz.*) when you shall shoot the vast Gulf, and lanch out into the infinite Ocean of Eternity, that hath neither bounds, banks, nor bottom.

Immortal souls! Do you see any thing that hath Eternity engraven upon it? There are variety of objects, both of persons and things, that present themselves to your view: Lift up your eyes to the vast Heavens that are bespangled and beautified with a glorious Sun, Moon, and glittering Stars, that have been there for some thousands of years, see whether eternity be there? No, they had their beginning, and must have their Period, *Gen.* 1. 1. *Heb.* 1. 10, 11. *Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the Foundations of the Earth, and the Heaven are the works of thine*

thine hands: They shall perish, they shall wax old as doth a garment, but thou remainest: The day is coming wherein *the Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood; The Stars of Heaven shall fall, and the Powers of the Heavens shall be shaken; the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth with the works that are therein shall be burnt up, Matth.* 24. 29. 2 *Pet.* 3. 10.

Moreover, look to your near and dear Relations, for whom you expose your selves to so much pain, care, and trouble; Look to *Abraham* your Father, and to *Sarah* that bare you (as the Prophet speaketh in another case) to your Husbands, Wives, Children, Parents, Friends, Neighbours, Magistrates, Ministers; are these for ever? No: Many of them are gone down to the dark Valley already, and shall return no more: or look to those brave Heroes, *Alexander*, *Cæsar*, *Pompey*, and where are they? are they not all conquered by the King of terrors, and held in the Prison of the Grave, for many hundred years: Look to your Silver, Gold, Pearl, Perfumes, costly Cabinets, stately Structures, Princes Pallaces;

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are these for ever? No: They are corruptible things, and cannot deliver in the day of the Lords wrath: Kings Palaces are desolate places, ready to become a heap: Crowns are translated from head to head; Scepters pass from one hand to another; and Kingdoms have their rise, and they have their ruine: And will you sell your precious souls for pelf, and transitory trash, which indeed is more in expectation then in fruition; consider how little that is worth, for which you run the dreadful hazard of losing Heaven.

But now (if you are Believers) lift up your eyes to the everlasting Hills, and put the Eagles eye of Faith within the Vail, there's the Ancient of Days, God your Father the chiefest good, and highest happiness; there is Christ your dear Redeemer, the Prince of Glory; and a House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens; and upon the favour of God, the love and Righteousness of Christ, you may see Eternity.

Again, turn your eyes inward to the hidden man of the heart; is there the seed of God, or impress of his Image, and the Divine Nature? 1 *John* 3. 9. 2 *Pet.* 1. 4.

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Is there an active, living, ſpringing principle of Grace? *John* 4. 14. On this thou maiſt read Eternity; Grace is the Heir of glory, every drop of which runs into the Ocean, and nothing elſe can befriend you; *For the things that are ſeen are temporal, but the things that are not ſeen are eternal*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18.

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5. Conſider, *which of the two Eternities you are going towards?* I would have you deeply and ſeriouſly conſider, That there is one place for the Sheep, and another for the Goats; one place for the Righteous, and another for the Ungodly; one place for Believer, and another for Unbelievers; one place for the Dead, and another for the Living: An eternal Night, or eternal Day; eternal Pains, or eternal Pleaſures; eternal Bliſs, or eternal Burning; an eternal Life, or eternal Death; an eternal Heaven, or an eternal Hell.

Now Sinners, ſtop here and conſider, unto which of the two do you belong? Have you any certainty of a bleſſed and glorious Eternity? that Heaven, not Hell, will

will be your place and portion; for resolving of which, consider and answer to these Queries.

Have you unfeignedly believed, repented and turned to God with the renting of your hearts, and resigned your whole souls to him? do you find your hearts affectionately and venemently carried out to Jesus Christ so, as not to be satisfied without Union and Communion with him? Is Jesus Christ the Beloved and Darling of your Souls?

Have you (being sensible of what you have done against him, and of your unworthiness of him) by a deep, and heart humiliation, laid a Foundation for Heaven and Happiness? You must Sow before you can Reap, and they that Sow in tears, shall Reap in joy, *Psal.* 126. 5.

Are you Heaven-born, or born after the flesh only? If by a sound work of conversion, you are become new creatures indeed, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. It is well, stand and wonder at amazing mercy; if not, fear and tremble; for if you fail here, you are utterly undone for ever.

Further, are you risen with Christ, or dead in trespasses and Sins? *Eph.* 2. 1. Are you partakers of the first resurrection,

on, or are you in your graves, rotting, stinking in your sins, being past feeling? are you truely at odds with Sin and every sin? or do you take pleasure in unrighteousnes? are you for Godlines in the life and power of it? and is there no reigning allowed sin in your hearts and ways? doth sin, and every sin look ugly, feel heavy, taste bitter? and no Idol of the heart to keep Christ out of his Throne? no secret sin lived in against Conscience? Do you pray and desire to live in the fear, and as under the eye of God, making conscience of secret sins, and of secret duties, with a sincere respect to Gods glory, and your own good? doth the heart-searching God find you in your Closets, on your knees morning and evening pouring out your souls before him? every one that is Godly will pray, *Psal.* 32. 6.

Are you crucified to the World, or do your souls cleave unto the dust? have you a Treasure in Heaven, or treasure in the Field onely? Have you bought the Pearl? or are you content with Pebbles? Who are your Associates? The, Devils Herd, or Christs Flock? are you companions for Swine and filty Dogs, the World of Ungodly; or of the Doves and Lambs

Lambs of Christ? whose mark have you? the mark of Sheep? (*viz.* Holiness, humility, innocency or the mark of Goats (*viz.* Lust, Pride, and uncleanness?) who keeps the Throne? the King of Saints, or the God of this World? do your hearts and lives speak, *Heaven, Heaven, Heaven*, or *Hell, Hell, Hell*; Hell is not more the place of the devil, then the heart of a wicked man. Can you look upwards and say, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, or must you look down-werd and say, *Our Father which art in Hell*. How can you take comfort in any thing of this World, that are like to be unspeakably and eternally miserable in the other World. Suppose you had as much of the Riches, Pomp, and glory of the World as any man that ever liv'd upon the face of the Earth? If you could say, this Crown, this Kingdom, this Countrey is mine, this Gold, this Silver, or this Shop, these Goods, this Manner, this Farm, these Fields, these Flocks, this Corn, these Cattle, and these Mines, these Pearls, these Jewels are mine, what would all avail you; if your souls are the Devils? Now how stands the case of your precious souls? are they secured, have you made a real preparation for death

death and judgement, or left all undone? Are you veſſels of honour prepared unto Glory, or Veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction? *Rom.* 9. 22, 23. Let conſcience ſpeak, commune with your hearts, *Pſal.* 4. 4. Conſider your ways, *Hag.* 1. 5. Search and try your ſelves, *Lam.* 3. prove your own work, examine your ſelves whether you are in the Faith, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. Whatſoever you ſow, you ſhall certainly reap, *Gal.* 6. 7, 8. And in the place where the Tree falleth there it ſhall lye, *Eccl.* 11. 13. If it falleth to the North, it lyeth to the North; if it falleth towards the South, it lyeth towards the South. If you live and dye towards Heaven, Heaven will be your place and home: but if you live and dye towards Hell, Hell will be your place and home. For according to your doing in this World, will be your doom in the World that is to come, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. And is it not ſad and dreadful, to believe that you have precious never dying ſouls, and do not know whether they ſhall be ſav'd or damn'd, ſtand or fall, live or die to all Eternity? And yet this is the caſe of thouſands, and millions of men and women now in the World, that are making poſt haſt to Hell, and think

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and hope they are in the way toward Heaven, *Prov.* 16. 25.

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6. Consider, *How near you are to your everlasting habitation:* You are all going down amain the stream of time, into the great Ocean, and you will shortly come thither. There's not a step you step, nor a breath you draw, not a word you speak, not a moment of time you live, but hath an influence upon Eternity. These golden sands running between two Eternities will quickly be gone, a short race will be soon run. O what a nothing is our life! viz. a span, a dream, a wind, a shadow, a vapour, a post, swifter then a post, *Job* 7. 6. You are all going to your long and last home, to the house of Eternity, every man goeth to his long home, *Eccl.* 12. 5. How doth he go? he goeth swiftly, always in motion, night and day, sleeping and walking, labouring or loytering, this post hastens, time and tide stays not. Again, he goeth insensibly, man doth not discern, or perceive how his precious time doth fly from him; the shadow on the Dial

Dial passeth from one hour or figure to another, from the Sun rising to its setting, though its speedy transient motion is not observed: So man passeth from infancy to Child-hood, from child-hood to youth, from youth to middle age, and so to old age, and the Grave; and we take little or no notice of it. Again, he goeth irresistably, neither men nor Angels, Physick or Physitian can keep him here; it is as easie to obstruct the whole course of Nature, or to hinder Gods Covenant of day and night: a man may as well restrain the Sun from rising, the Sea from flowing, or the wind from blowing, as keep man from dying and going to the place appointed for all living. We are but of yesterday, *Job* 8. 9. It was but as it were yesterday, and we were in the womb of nothing, had no being, and it will be but as it were to morrow, and we shall disappear, and be (as to this world) as if we had never been. We are crushed before the moth, *Job* 4. 19. And in a moment we go down to the Grave, and shall come up no more. Yea, our Pictures and Statues remain fresh and firm, when we are gone down to the Bars of the pit, and rest together in the dust, and our very Dogs, Horses live, when we

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are dead, and become meat for worms,

This heart-affecting meditation, had a very great influence on a great *Persian* King, who taking a view of his huge vast Army, wept to think that within a hundred years not one man of them would be left alive. Sinners, you are to look beyond the grave, because after death, the judgment, *Heb.* 9. 27. O then tremble to consider that you are all this day standing before the door of Eternity, either on the brink of life, or the brink of death, upon the borders of heaven, or the mouth of hell, and shall ere long be made to see what is on the other side of the wall; as soon as death hath shut your eyes, you shall see and know what you shall be for ever, If you are now unconverted and without God in the World, you are almost come within the sight of the burning Lake of Fire and Brimstone; but if Saints, you are almost within the view of the *New Jerusalem*; if Ungodly Sinners, you are almost within the dreadful noise of the Mile-stones of wrath, and the ratlings of the fiery chains of the Prisoners of Hell, the dolorous out-cries, and hideous roarings of the spirits in prison, crying out one and all, *O what an evil*

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and an infinite evil, and bitter bitter thing is sin, which we would not consider or believe, till we came to this dismal place of torment: There you may hear the cursed tormented unbeliever crying out upon his God-provoking, Christ-rejecting, and soul-murdering sin of infidelity, saying in the anguish of his soul, *If I had accepted of the remedy, I had not been in this doleful misery, the Lord of Glory was at the door, I heard him knock a long time; but would not let him in, therefore is Hells mouth shut upon me for ever.* There the Swearers, Liars, Blasphemers, that did tear and rend the sacred name of their Creator, and swear by the blood and wounds of their offered Redeemer, are heard with their hot and scorched tongues to bewail that ever they should take the name of the infinite Holy God in vain.

There the hypocritical and false-hearted professors, the sinners in *Sion* cry out, and wish that either they had made no shew of love to Christ and Holiness at all, or that they had lov'd him in sincerity, and above all, that so they might have escaped everlasting burnings.

There the impudent, ranting, swinish Drunkard, that pleas'd his eye and pallate with

with his pleasant cups, sparkling Wine, and cursed Companions, is heard to wish in the Agony of his soul, *O that I had been sober, temperate, abstemious, that so I might not have tasted of the Wine of the wrath of God, which is red, and full of mixture, the dregs whereof I must be made to drink forever, Psal. 75. 8. Isa. 5. 22.*

There the filthy unclean Adulterers, and Adultereſſes, that burn'd in their Helliſh luſts, which they were reſolved to ſatisfie, are heard to wiſh, *O that we had been ſober, modeſt, chaſte, and that our wanton luſtful eyes had been ſtark blind and never known or ſeen the face of man or woman, that we might not have ſuffered the vengeance of eternal fire*, Jude 7.

There the notoriouſly vile, abominable Atheiſts, that mockt and ſcoft at the belief of a Deity and judgement to come, and that ſaid in the pride and ſtoutneſs of their hearts, let him make ſpeed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it, for we have made a Covenant with death, and with Hell are we at agreement, may be heard to roar and cry, *O that we had heard, believed, and feared what was fore-told by Miniſters concerning this dark and dreadful place before it was too late.*

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There the worlding and wretched Earthworm, that made Earth his Heaven, gold his God and chiefest good, is heard to say in the grief of his heart, *O that I had never seen either Gold of Silver all my days, so that I might have had a better portion; or that I had with* Lazarus *beg'd my bread, so that I might not have come into this place of torment.*

There the timerous fearful cowardly Apostate and back-slider in heart, who for fear of a little outward hardship, declin'd his professed principles, and turn'd his back on Christ, and his persecuted little Flock, may be heard to wish, that either he had never known the way of righteousness, or that he had been faithful unto the death.

Secure, and sadly deluded souls, consider you are not far from this direful gulf, where multitudes of souls lament and weep day and night; and certainly, if the horrible and amazing cries and yellings of those infernal spirits were sounding in your ears, you would not rest quiet in your Beds or Houses.

There were sad and astonishing outcries when the world was drown'd, when *Sodom* was burn'd, to see the Clouds sud-

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denly drop fire on their heads and houſes, and men, women, and children, burning together: but this was but a flea-bite, to that place, where is weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth to all Eternity. Remember all you that forget God, the day of your calamity is at hand, and the things that ſhall come upon you make haſte, *Deut.* 32. 35.

But if you are the ſervants of the Lord, and real Saints, Mourners in Sion, lift up your heads and hearts, for you belong to another place, and better Country, *viz. to mount* Sion, *and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly* Jeruſalem, *and to an innumerable company of Angels; to the general Aſſembly, and Church of the firſt born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. And to* Jeſus *the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling, that ſpeaketh better things than that of* Abel, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23, 24. And know, that you are almoſt come within the hearing of thoſe heavenly Songs, eternal triumphs and Halleluiahs of Saints and glotious Angels in your Fathers houſe, *Where you will have fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore*, Pſ. 16. 11.

7. Consider, *How sudden, violent, or unexpected your end may be.* Therefore let none think or say, they shall dye in their nest, or promise your selves a time of preparation by a long life, or a lingring sickness, Consumption, or such like: Fearless, careless sinners! you don't know what a night, or what an hour may bring forth; the rich man in the Gospel while he dream'd of many dayes, was arrested by a killing and dreadful message, *Thou fool this night thy soul shall be required of thee*, Luke. 12. 20. He lives not, that knoweth, where, when, or how he shall dye; some have gone to bed well, and dyed the same night; others have drop't dead from their Horses; some have died at their Tables, whilst the meat hath been in their mouthes; others have died in their full strength, being wholly at ease and quier, with breasts full of milk, and bones moistned with marrow: others die in the bitterness of their soul, and never eat with pleasure. They shall lye down a like in the dust, and the worms shall cover them, when they are brought

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to the grave, and to remain in the tomb. Sirs! There are many dreadful instances in the word of God of the sad and sudden approach of this merciless messenger death, which stand as so many Sea-marks to give you warning, least death should come in an hour you look not for it, and find you unprepared. The King of the *Chaldeans* in his greatest jollity, and having not a thought of death, saw a hand-writing on the wall, which was very terrible, and the same night was slain. *While he was feasting and drinking wine, and praising the Gods of Gold and Silver: in the same hour came forth fingers of a mans hand, and wrote over against the Candlestick upon the Plaister of the wall of the Kings Pallace, and the King saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joynts of his loynes were loosed, and his knees smote one against another*, Dan. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6. and 30. Death is the King of terrours, and terrour of Kings. Good *Hezekiah* received a sudden summons for death, Isa. 38. 1. which made him turn his face to the wall, pray, and weep sore, and to chatter like a Crane, and mourn like a Dove, in the bitterness of his soul, because he

was to go to the gates of the grave, and to the pit where there is no hope. The first born in *Egypt* were slain at midnight, which made a great cry, *Exod.* 29. 30. *Korah* and his wicked company were swallowed up in the midst of their Rebellion, *Numb.* 16. 30, 31. *They went down quickly into the pit, and all Israel fled at the cry of them.*

There dyed suddenly of the men of *Bethshemesh* fifty thousand and threescore and ten, because they looked into the Ark, 1 *Sam.* 6. 19. And God many times taketh away the desire of our eyes with a stroak, as he did *Ezekiels* Wife, *Ezek.* 24. 16. *Job's* children died at their banquet. *Ishboshesh* was smitten and died in his sleep, *Ananias* and *Saphira* being Husband and Wife, died within three or four houres one of the other with a lie in their mouths, *Act.* 5. 5, 10. The righteous Judge many times shoots an arrow suddenly at wicked men, who dye in the act of sin, *Ps.* 64. 7. When they are about to fill their bellies, the Lord doth cast the fury of his wrath upon them, as he did upon the chosen men of *Israel*, Ps. 78. 30, 31. Many times, God, to execute his fierce wrath, sends out his destroying

Angels,

Angels, who will make dreadful work in a little time, for in one night in the Camp of the *Assirians*, the angel of the Lord smote a hundred and fourtscore and five thousand, that in the morning were all dead Corpses, *Isa.* 37. 36. How short and uncertain is our life, subject every moment to the stroak of death, & which the least crumb or flye may put an end unto, as it hath to many. And as our end may be sudden, so also it may be violent; a mortal disease may invade both Heart and head, and poor dying creatures many times are so distressed and distracted, that they cannot think of any thing but their tormenting pain, being uncapable to say any thing to God or men about their souls! O how stupid and unsensible do many souls make their passage into the other world! like *Nabal*, or like a man in a lethargy; or as so many stocks or stones, and not awake till they awake in the flames of hell. The rich man dyed, and in hell he lift up his eyes; his first and second death was very unexpected. All you obdurate sinners! stand here and wonder at the marchless mercy, and infinite patience of the great God, in delaying the

King of terrors so long; God hath not dealt so kindly with thousands of sinners that are gon before unto judgement, and who went down to the pit in a moment, witness the late dreadful Plague, by the means of which a hundred thousand souls were sent into Eternity. O let not *London*, nor *England* forget that, and other tremendous judgments, which our sins have called for, lest a worse then any yet should come upon us. The forgetting of our latter end is a deadly and provoking sin, and that which will hasten judgement. *Her filthiness is in her skirts, she remembred not her last end: therefore she came down wonderfully, she had no comforter.* Lam. 1. 9.

8. Consider, *That when death cometh to strike the stroake, your souls are stated, your Eternity is cast without change for ever.* Then your immortal souls are for salvation or damnation, for an eternal life, or eternal death, for an eternal heaven, or an eternal hell. You sadly besotted souls! know and remember, while you have a day, before the golden threed of life be

cur, that if you be found without Christ, Faith, Repentance, Holiness, but a moment after death, you are undone to Eternity. After death all means and hopes fail, there is no work or device in the grave, *Eccles.* 9. God will be then irreconcilable, sin unpardonable, heaven not attainable, and your souls lost irrecoverably. And then the Devil your bloody adversary will have his designe upon you; he knoweth, that if you be his in life and death, that you are his for ever, and that he and you shall never part. Sinners, this is certain, as the tree falleth, so it lyeth; as is the seed, so will be the harvest: if you do the Devils work, you must have the devils wages; if you march under the command and conduct of the Prince of Darkness, and suffer him to lead and hurry you hither and thither at his will, whil'st you live, you will be his prisoners and slaves in that dreadful dungeon of dismal darkness after you are dead.

Consider, the Land of darkness is no place for service, there's no repenting in the grave, no Lord have mercy on us written upon Hell Gates, no Sabbaths, no Sermons, no Ministers there. 'Tis in the time of life that you are to labour,

and make preparation for life eternal, because according to your work and choice in this world, will be your everlasting lot in the world that is to come. It is appointed for you once to dye, and after death the judgement, *Heb.* 9. 7. The pale horse death goeth before, and hell followeth after, *Rev.* 6. 8. there will be no change of your condition; the eternal ruine, or eternal welfare of your precious souls depends on those few minutes; this swift stream of mans life, after it once turneth or declineth, ever runneth with a perpetual ebb, never floweth again: so that all that you leave undone now, will be undone for ever. If you die unbeleivers, you will be unbeleivers for ever; if you dye under the guilt and power of sin and wrath of God, you will remain under the guilt of sin and wrath of God for ever: but if you dye holy, humble, mortified, sincere souls, you will remain holy, heavenly, and in the favour of God for ever: *Rev.* 22. *He that is filthy, will be filthy still, and he that is holy will be holy still:* but the inpenitent unpardoned sinner, though he live a hundred, or a thousand years in satisfying his lust, will be accurst at last. Poor sinners! that

read

read this little Treatise, let me beg you to up and be doing while it is day, the night will come, wherein you, nor no man can work; *John* 9. 4. Then to your work with might and main while your candle is burning, your Sun shining: will you yet loiter, and see your glass running, your Sun setting, your selves dying, and your souls perishing? *O seek the Lord while he may be found*, Isa. 55. 5. in an acceptable time, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. before the day pass as the chaff, before the decree bring forth, before the evil day cometh, before they that look out of the windows be dark, and the keepers of the house begin to tremble, before the doors be shut in the streets, and the silver cord be loosed, or the Pitcher broken at the fountain, before you are gone to your long home, and the spirit return'd to God that gave it.

Consider with your selves, are you fit to grapple with this mighty Monarch death, are you fraught'ed for this long Voyage, and ready and willing to pass through this dark Entry; take heed and feare, lest you be found unfit. Think on the sadly deluded Virgins, that had their Oyl to buy when their Lamps

should burn, and so came to the door, but found it shut; think upon poor *Esau* that was hunting for Vienson, while he lost the blessing.

Poor perishing souls! what do you intend to do? if you will work, it must be now or never. Are you resolved to seek and secure the Kingdome of God first, *Mat.* 6. 23. whilst it is called to day, or will you bestow nothing but dregs and snuffs of rotten old age upon God and your immortal souls? O that you might know in this your day the things which belong to your Peace, before they be hid from your eyes?

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9. Lastly consider, *That it is the most dreadful and amazing sight on this side hell, to see a Christless unbeliever breathing out his last*: There are other sad sights, *viz.* to see a man starving for want of bread, or dying for want of a physitian, or drowning for want of a boat, or to see a man dead, a dead corps, a body without a soul; but ah! how sad and astonishing a spectacle is it, to see a man near the coasts of Eternity, *viz.* to behold a wretch

wretched ſinner in his cold ſweats and dying groanes, with his precious immortal ſoul ſtanding on his pale, cold, quivering lips, and death the great Conqueror, and the King of terrors, marching furiouſly with his Writ of remove in one hand (not to be reverſt) and his deadly dart and ſting in the other hand, conſcience on the rack, barking, biting, and tearing him like a Lyon, the Devil, Gods Executioner looking on and ſtanding by, the heart under dejecting and ſinking deſpair, the eyes dim and fixed, his heart-ſtrings ready to break with anguiſh, his Wife, Children, Friends at the bed-ſide weeping, ſighing, crying, wringing their hands, beating their breaſts, the Wife crying out, alas my Husband! the Child crying out, alas my Father! The poor periſhing ſoul all this while looking backward upon his miſpent time, and bypaſt ſins, inward upon his own heart, a dreadful ſight! where he ſeeth no Chriſt, no grace, no purity, nothing but ſin, guilt, death, darkneſs: Then looking upward to that God that hath been provoked, to that Chriſt that hath been rejected, to that Heaven and Eternity that he hath loſt, and looking down-ward to

that dark and dreadful pit that must be his place and portion (with a fearful looking for of judgement) seeing the Devils come and ready to seiz upon him. O what a dreadful out-cry, and shriek will the soul make when it departs, perceiving it self sinking down, down to the burning lake, and bottomless pit, where he must take up his lodging with devouring fire to all Eternity!

The pangs of death, the worlds loss, anguish of Conscience, & frights of hell, meeting together, will make a man perfectly miserable, and force him to cry out with cursed *Cain*, Gen. 4. 13. *My punishment is greater then I can bear*; or to say with the sadly afflicted Church, *behold, no sorrow like unto my sorrow.* And if the dreadful reflection of a guilty accusing conscience be so tormenting here, what will the whole flame and Sea of wrath be, when poured out to the very utmost?

Senseless sinners! Consider, this may be your doleful case when you come to die, *viz.* to have much sorrow and wrath with your sickness, *Eccl.* 5. 17. *For there is no peace to the wicked, saith my God*: not one word in all the Bible but speaks ter-

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rour in life and death; though the ſinner live a hundred years he ſhall be accurſt, he dieth under the curſes written in God's Book; yea, under that moſt dreadful Goſpel curſe, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. The apprehenſion of which will cauſe ſuch diſtraction of ſpirit, and ſad reflection of guilt, which will make them curſe their God and their King; looking down to the pit, roaring out; *Who among us ſhall dwell with devouring fire? who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* Therefore be wiſe to conſider this, all ye that forget God, *leſt he tear you in peeces, and there be none that can deliver*, Pſal. 50. 22.

And as it is dreadful and amazing to ſee the unbeleiver dying, ſo on the contrary, 'tis comfortable and reviving to ſee the godly man dying, becauſe his *ultimum* is his *optimum*, his laſt is his beſt; *the day of his death is better then the day of his birth*, Eccl. 7. 1. *His end is peace*, Pſal. 37. 37.

God at peace, Conſcience at peace, and all at peace, O bleſſed ſight, to ſee the heaven born panting ſoul going out of the world upon the wings of joy, calmneſs and ſerenity of ſpirit, with full ſail for heaven; longing and crying out, make

make no tarrying O my God, haſte my beloved, haſte, ſo come Lord Jeſus, I deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all, *Phil.* 1. 23.

You have heard what are the great things to be conſidered, namely, that an end will certainly be, this world is no place of continuance; they that now ſee you, ere long will ſee you no more for ever. You have heard that your preſent things will periſh, that ſin ſo full of deadly poyſon will leave a ſting, a dart that will ſtrike through your Liver, and that the caſe of the wicked will be doleful, dreadful, yea, deſperate, when they come to dye, for when death comes, your ſouls then will be ſtated, ſo as there can be no alteration to all Eternity.

The next thing is to ſpeak to the reaſons, why it is a duty and matter of ſuch moment to conſider, are theſe following.

Reaſ. 1. Is taken from God, *Becauſe the only wiſe, gracious, moſt indulgent, and ſoul-compaſſionating God, wiſheth it, and that moſt vehemently. O that they were wiſe! that*

that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end : Sirs, in this pathetical Option, or desire, there is the very tender bowels of God ; this is the very language of his heart, and it is, as if he had (after the manner of men) spoken thus to his faithful servant *Moses*. I have but one wish, or request, and all is comprehended in this one, *viz.* that thou shouldst go and tell them from me, that they must be wise to consider this, to remember the dayes of old, and the years of many Generations, what I have done for them in chusing them above all the Nations of the world to be my treasure, portion, and peculiar people; and because I love them, I have delivered them, wrought wonders for them in *Egypt*, the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, and have kept them as tenderly as the apple of mine eye, carrying them upon Eagles wings; but yet let them know, that they have forgotten me, provoked me, and that their end is like to be miserable, for a fire is kindled in mine anger, and unless they do speedily consider, it will burn to the lowest hell.

Now you souls in peril, which is best? to thwart, cross, and greive your well-wishing,

wishing, dearest, best and only friend, or to please and gratifie your professed, deadly, implacable enemy? your adversary the Devil can't endure that you should think of death or dying; for if Satan that old Serpent would permit, and suffer you to look into hell, he could neither drag nor draw you thither at his pleasure. And will you go on in the wayes of sin and death? or bethink your selves whose you are, what you have done, whither you are going, and what is like to become of you when your breath is gone, what provision you have made for your other world, that so the great business between God and your souls may be made up.

Sinners! if the infinitely holy, just, and righteous God, did desire or designe your ruine and destruction, he would not have excited you to this solemn and serious consideration of the end of sin, death, and Eternity, until it were too late, and you left without remedy; so that what is here intended hath a tendency to make you happy, if it be regarded, *O that they were wise*, &c.

Real. 2. *Because a deep, serious, and heart-affecting consideration of death and the grave, will both realize it, and represent it as near, even at the door, and make it to stand in open view:* Whereas things look'd upon at a distance, whether they be good, or whether they be evil, have but a little, if any influence: Now a fixed and hearty consideration, will give as it were a being to future things, and bring them near, so that you may really converse with those things.

A truly godly man, that hath a view of unseen things by divine contemplation here, upon the wings of faith and hope, he may ascend up into heaven, and walk a turn in the golden streets of the New *Jerusalem*, as the Prophet *Ezekiel* was in the Visions of God at *Jerusalem* in his mind, when his body was by the River *Chebar* among the Captives in the Land of the *Chaldeans*; so likewise those sadly wounded spirits, who through fear of death are all their life-time subject to bondage, being exercis'd with soul-conflicts, and under powerful cutting and killing convictions of sin and misery, or have

have such dark and dismal thoughts and apprehensions of hell and the wrath of God, which make them ever and anon to enter into the Chambers of death, and visit the prisoners of the pit, and look upon that black guilt and fiery furnace to be so near, that they are on the brink of it falling down continually. This hath been the case of many of Gods precious ones, who are now in heaven above all these fears and frights that were once more bitter then death. And O how many travailing with these pangs and agonies of soul are ready to cry out with holy *Job*, *Chap.* 6. 4. *The arrowes of the Almighty are within me, the poyson whereof drinketh up my spirit, the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me*: Such is the nature of meditation, or consideration, that it will cause future and remote things to have a real, powerful, and deep impression on our minds. As for instance.

A Merchant in *India*, by his meditation, or contemplation, may converse with his Affairs, his Wife, Children, and Friends in *England*; or a Merchant that's walking on the Exchange in *London*, may have his mind and thoughts in *Spain*, or *Italy*,

Inn, or else where; a Malefactor cast into Prison for some notorious Crime, may, long before the Assizes, converse with all the sad circumstances of his tryal, he may (in his thoughts) see himself brought to the bar, standing before a terrible Judge to heare his indictment read, the Charge prov'd, his doom and sentence pronounced, and see (as it were) himself at the place of his execution, with the rope about his neck, which must immediately hang him: and if you would in good earnest set your selves to consider your latter end, you may really and heart-affectingly converse with old Age Weakness, Sickness, your death-Bed, short-Breathing, cold sweats, dying Pangs, and Groans, Winding-sheets, Coffins, and see your selves (as it were) streched out, nail'd up, and on the shoulders of men carrying to the grave, where Worms and filthy Vermine must feed upon you.

The Servants of God, and Saints of old, have done this with great success, & soul advantage, and so should you. They have reckoned or counted their Lives by dayes, because they were every day liable to Death, and expected it daily.

Teach

Teach us to number our dayes, said *Moses*, Psal. 90. 12. *Few and evil have the dayes of my life been*, said old *Jacob*. *For man that is born of a woman, is of few dayes*, Job 1. 1, 5. *All the time of which* (said *Job*) *will I wait till my change come*, Job 14. 14. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house* (a dark house) *appointed for all living*. And Chapter the 17. 1. he said *my breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the Graves are ready for me*; where-ever he went or came, he was looking for a Grave. Again, by consideration we may not only look to the Grave, but beyond it, to the great Transactions, and astonishing things that shall be after death. We may converse with the worlds burning, Christ's coming, the Trumpets sounding, the Graves opening, the Deads rising, the Wickeds roaring, who (as jolly as they are) shall then cry to dead and deaf Mountains and Rocks to fall on them to hide them from the dreadful face of the now slighted Son of God; for in that great day of his fierce and terrible wrath, they will not be able to stand, *Rev.* 6. 16. 17.

By realizing this consideration, we may see the Judge standing behind

hind the door; and the Son of God (as it were) ready to break forth out of the Clouds with power and great Glory, as *Hieron* did, who said, whether I eat or drink, I hear this voice in mine ears, *Arise ye dead and come to judgement*: Now if a right consideration of the great things to come be so penetrating, and heart-awakening, let death, which alwayes dogeth you at your heels, be often upon your thoughts, your heads and hearts too should be much upon it; every night you lye down, and every morning you arise, let there be some serious and awful thoughts of death and Eternity. That which many have engraven on their Rings, *viz. Remember to dye*, let it be by the Pen of a Diamond written on your hearts. It's storied of *Philip of Macedon*, that he laid a charge upon one of his servants to come every morning into his chamber, and proclaime this, that he was mortal; and if a Heathen were so careful of keeping the memory of his mortality, much more should a Christian; we should alwayes remember the dayes of darkness, and keep life and death, heaven and hell before us, there being but a step between us and death. The neglect

and

and want of this, was *Israels* sin, and *Jerusalems* too, *She did not remember her last end, therefore she came down wonderfully*, Lam. 1. 9. And this God, who would have us remember, and consider, doth sadly complain of by the Prophet, *Isa.* 1. 3. calling heaven and earth to witness for him, *Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth, the Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Asse his Masters crib, but* Israel *doth not know, my people do not consider.*

Real. 3. *A serious consideration of your latter end (through grace) will prove an absolute and soveraign Antidote to expel the greatest evil (yea, a means to escape an infinite loss) viz. sin, and the dreadful effects, and consequences of it.*

What is the cause of that inundation and flood of wickedness, and most prodigious sins, that are now in the world, and in this Nation, in every City, Town, and Place, and in the most Families, among all ranks and degrees of men, *viz.* Magistrates, Ministers, People, Parents, Children, Masters, Servants,

but

but this, their not duly, and deeply conſidering their latter end; this we find laid down in the word of God to be one main ground of all ſin, and of the neglect of all duties.

You careleſs ſouls! did you beleive and remember that you muſt die and come to judgement, that your naked ſouls, and naked ſins, muſt ſhortly ſtand before the moſt tremendous, direful Judge of quick and dead, the reflection hereof would be as a knife at your throats, as a ſword at your breaſt, or as a hand-writing on the wall, to retard and hinder your conſtant and deſperate courſe of wickedneſs.

O what horrid, helliſh outrages are, now committed, and that deliberality, impudently, obſtinately, even againſt the light of nature, Conſcience, Scripture? What Curſing, Lying, Swearing, Blaſpheming, Sabbath-breaking, Cheating, Couzening, Stealing! what wantonneſs, filthineſs, uncleanneſs, ſwiniſh drunkenneſs, covetouſneſs, earthly-mindedneſs! what mocking, ſcoffing, wrath, envy, malice, pride, paſſion, and ſpiritual wickedneſs too, as unbeleif, a theiſm, impenitency, hypocriſie, apoſtacy, hatred of God,

God, his people, ministers, wayes, and ordinances every where aboundeth! Men declare their sins like *Sodom*, and are not ashamed of the unfruitful works of darkness; and why? but because they do not set their minds and hearts upon their latter end.

Poor dying sinners (Let me! out of tender compassion to your bleeding, and almost sinking souls) intreat you as for the Lords sake, to goe down to the grave, to go down to hell in your thoughts, and stop here, and think of the King of terrours, the worm of Conscience, the approach of Devils, the burning lake, the bottomless pit, the loss of God, of Christ, of Heaven, and your precious souls; remember, those fiery, scorching, endless flames, the presence and company of Devils, Reprobates and damned spirits; and your sweet morsels will be gall and wormwood to you: these amazing things being truly reflected on, will be as lightning in your eyes, as thunder in your ears, as thorns, darts, and swords in your flesh, as poyson in your bowels, as fire in your bones, to compel and force you speedily to curb and check the reins of your hellish lusts, that you so might flye from wrath to come. Did

Did you but view that dark and cold grave, and hot hell that is ſo neer, you would rather ſtarve or dye then run to that exceſs of riot; you could not ſleep, and ſnort, dance and ſport upon the pits brink under ſuch a conſideration.

But forget all this, baniſh the thoughts of God, death, and hell, and you will run and ruſh into ſin, as the horſe into battel, *Luk.* 12. 45. crying peace, peace, till danger, death and deſtruction cometh, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 3.

This was that mighty ſin that ripened *Jeruſalem* for ruine, and brought her down wonderfully: her filthineſs is in her skirts, ſhe remembreth not her laſt end. The Lord complaineth by the Prophet *Iſaiah* of the ſame thing, *Iſrael* doth not know; my people doth not conſider; but what follows, ah ſinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers, they have forſaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy one of *Iſrael*; compare *Lam.* 1. 9. *Iſa.* 1. 3. 4.

But he that doth that which is lawful and right, ſhall ſave his ſoul alive; who is that? he that conſidereth and turneth away from all his tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, he ſhall ſave his ſoul,

whosoever doth perish, that man shall never perish, *Ezek.* 18. 14. 28.

Reas. 4. *The consideration of your latter end, will be a powerful incentive to make you exert and put forth the greatest industry in a way of duty*, yea, it will certainly have an influence upon all our duties, and upon all our graces; for considering and doing are frequently joyn'd together, *Psal.* 41. 1. *Prov.* 31. 16. *she considereth a field, and buyeth it: I thought on my wayes, or considered my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies*, *Psal.* 119. 59. *Lam.* 3. 40. *Heb.* 10. This, if any thing, will make you serious, diligent, and constant in any duty, and to work while it is day, before the night cometh wherein no man can work. The Apostle exhorts to consider one another, to provoke to love and good works, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching, *Heb.* 10. 24, 25. The remembrance of the day of our death, and of our passing into eternity, with a deep impression of it upon the heart, will be as a voice of thunder, speaking to the secure senseless sinner, awake, awake,

awake thou that ſleepeſt, open thine eys, ſtand upon thy feet, and behold and ſee what a ſea of blood and wrath is here. See and beleive, beleive and conſider, conſider and fear, fear and fly, and make haſt in thy work: Thy work is great and weighty, diverſions are many, adverſaries are ſtrong, thy ſtrength is ſmall, thy time is ſhort, thy account is great, death and judgement are at the door, therefore up and be doing, now, or never.

You ſlow and ſlothful ſouls! Let your apparent and inevitable danger ſuddenly provoke and ſpur you unto your duty, to ſeek the Lord in a time accepted, before the door of life beſhut, God with-drawn, and mercy quite gone.

The prophaneſt Sea-man, will ſigh, mourn, pray, promiſe, vow, if death and danger looks him in the face; when the ſhip was like to be broken, and death threatned immediately to ſurprize them, the Marriners were ſore afraid, and cryed every one to his God. And this, the very light of nature dictated to the ſhip-maſter (though a Heathen) that then it was no ſeaſon to ſleep, what meaneſt thou O ſleeper? ariſe and call upon thy

God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not, *Jonah* 1. 6. and the most notorious thieves and murderers will pray in prison, or when they come to the Gallows, the place of execution.

When the most righteous Judge sent his destroying Angels to the City of *London*, and other places in the year 65. for the dreadful fear of which many thousands did flye, and many thousands did fall, *viz.* the carkases of men like dung upon the ground, and as handfuls after the Harvest man. When death did knock at a thousand doors in one night, O what confessing of sin, fastings, crying, and importunate knocking was there at the throne of grace (and it may be by many persons & families, that prayed but little before or since) that God would pity, pardon, and remove that amazing, sweeping judgement, which is now almost forgotten. Upon an unwakening apprehension of *Ninevehs* fatal ruine, the King and his Nobles decreed and proclaimed a Fast, and injoyned every one to cry mightily to God, *Jonah* 3. 7.

Sinners, were you but truly sensible of your peril, you would pray to purpose,

viz.

viz. more ardently, more inwardly, more deeply, more affectionately then ever you have done. It was a ſuppoſed danger, and that of death, that cauſed *Jacob* to weep and make ſupplication, for *Eſau* hated *Jacob*, and ſaid in his heart, the dayes of mourning for my Father are at hand, then will I ſlay *my* brother *Jacob*, *Gen.* 27. 42. and *Jacob* was greatly afraid and diſtreſſed, *Gen.* 31. 7. Which made him ſo importunate with God for deliverance, and he prevailed, *Gen.* 31. 11. *Hoſ.* 12. 4. Poor ſinners! your caſe is dangerous (I will not ſay deſperate) but you are ignorant of it; you do not know that you are poor, miſerable, blind, and naked; were you but ſenſible that you are liable to the wrath of God, the ſtroke and ſting of death every moment, it would conſtrain you to cry mightily to God for pardon. Holy *Job*, when he conſidered of Death and Judgement, ſet prayer to work, and ſaid, *Why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity, for now ſhall I ſleep in the duſt: O that thou wouldeſt hide me in the grave, that thou wouldeſt keep me ſecret until thy wrath be paſt, that thou wouldeſt appoint me a ſet time, and remember me*, Job 7, 21. & 14. 13.

This

This also made those two gracious Kings *Hezekiah* and *David*, to weep and pray in the bitterness of their souls: *In those dayes was* Hezekiah *sick unto death, and* Isaiah *the Prophet came unto him, and said, thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order, for thou shalt dye, and not live*; *then* Hezekiah *turned his face to the wall, and wept sore, and prayed to the Lord*, Isa. 28. 1, 2, 3. *David*, when the sorrows of death compassed him, and paines of hell got hold of him, then (said he) I *called upon the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee deliver my soul*, Psal. 116. 3, 4. *Jonah* that could sleep in the ship, prayed in the Whales belly, *Out of the belly of hell* I *cryed, and thou heardest my voice*, Jonah 2. 2. The Apostle *Peter*, and Christ himself presseth prayer from the consideration of the end of the world. *The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer*, 1 Pet. 4. 7. and *pray* (saith Christ) *that you may escape all these things, and stand before the Son of man*, Luk. 21. 36. Neither doth our dear Lord Jesus press that on us, which he did not practice; for being sensible of the bitter and most dreadful cup of his Fathers wrath, prayed, *Father, if it be possible,*

ble, let this cup pass, Matth, 26. 39:

Sinners! let me tell you, as secure and senseless as you are, an awakning impression of approaching death and judgement upon your souls; would be as the cry at midnight, to excite and stir you up, to get in your Oyle, and to trim your lamp. The Virgins, both wise and foolish, were all asleep and secure enough; until that sudden and amazing cry was heard, behold the Bridegroom cometh, go you forth to meet him, *Math. 26. 6. Then they all arose, and trimmed their Lamps.* 'Tis the storm and rain that hastens the Bee into the Hive; that brings the Traveller into his Inn, the Ship into the Harbour; so likewise the sense of death, the dead and drousie Professor unto his prayer; *in their afflictions they will seek me early*, Hos. 5. 15.

Anh eart-affecting meditation of unchangeable eternity, will be as a voice from the clouds, crying, *hast sinner hast, post hast, hast at for thy life in the work of faith and repentance, in parting with sin, and closing with Jesus Christ, without which there will be no hope. Noah* was moved with fear, and prepared and got into the Ark, to the saving of his house, when the se-

cure deluded world died by the deluge, *Heb.* 11. 7. *Knowing the terrour of the Lord we perſwade men*, 2 Cor. 5. 11.

You wretched ſinners, that will not beleive or conſider until you are juſt dropping into the pit, if you had but a little cranny to look into the other world, how violent and reſolute would you be in the ſpeedy proſecution of your known duty; you would examine, prove, and try your ſelves; you would read, hear, meditate, watch, pray, repent, fear, love, obey more then ever. Did you ſee, the night will come, is coming, and that the dayes of darkneſs ſhall be many, whatſoever you do, you would do it with your might, *Eccl.* 9. 10. Now before the decree bring forth, before the day paſs as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, ſeek ye the Lord; for how ſhall you eſcape if you neglect ſo great ſalvation, *Zeph.* 2. 23. *Heb.* 2. 3.

Reaſ. 5. *You are to conſider your latter end, becauſe there lyeth your higheſt wiſdom. O that they were wiſe, &c.* If you would be

be so wise as to exceed all the Wise men, great Statists and Politicians in the world, it must be in considering of, and preparing for your end. Sirs, in this you are most concerned, because hereby you will promote your own interest, for it will make a man profitable to himself, wise for himself, *Job* 22. 2. *Prov.* 9. 12. 'Tis true wisdome to understand this, *viz.* to be wise to that which is good, *Rom.* 16. 19. to be wise in Christ; to secure the cheifest good, is the best wisdom.

There are many worldly wise men, who while they live provide for every thing but death, and they are often ready to dye, before they begin to live (in a spiritual sense) and is it not a very unfit and sad season, to prepare for death when its a burden to live? And indeed such are the many evils attending old age, that men can have no pleasure in them, *Eccl.* 12. 1. And shall these be accounted the only wise men, that are but wise in their Generation to get the world, to pursue lying vanities, and forsake their own mercies, to hew out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water, and forsake the fountain of living water? this is to prefer Pebbles before Pearls, to gain

Earth, and to loſe Heaven, *Jer.* 2. 13. *Jonah* 2. 8. *Math.* 16. 26. To be happy for a time, and miſerable to eternity.

True wiſdom, and ſerious conſideration, is exerciſed about things good & evil, yea it is converſant about the beſt good, how it may attain it, and about the worſt evil, how it may impede, avoid and eſcape it, chuſing the moſt adequate and effectual means to bring it to paſs. This excellent divine wiſdom is proper and profitable to direct, *Prov.* 10. 10. and ſo it doth every conſidering godly man while he lives, firſtly and firmly to ſecure that which he hath of greateſt value, *viz.* a precious ſoul, more worth then any thing he ſtands poſſeſſed of: If all the Rocks were Pearls, all the earth and Heaven Gold, or if all the water in the vaſt Ocean were converted into Cryſtal, or the moſt precious ſtones in the world, and put all into one ſcale, and the ſoul into the other ſcale, the ſoul would weigh it all down. Our dear Lord tells us, that the gaining of the whole world is an invaluable conſideration to the loſs of our ſoul, *Math.* 16. So that he muſt be wiſe indeed, that hath gotten a Cabi-

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net for this rare incomparable Jewel, where it will be for ever safe. He that winneth souls is wise, saith the wisest of a meer man, *Prov.* 11. 30, and sure then he is so that saves his own. Again, he that considereth his end, is in the very way to procure and make the best friend, that will certainly stand him in stead to purpose, and in the greatest peril, *viz.* God, Christ, Angels, Saints, Conscience, Scripture, his real friends. When once the breach is made up between God and the poor soul, who can harm or hurt it? *If God be for us, who can be against us?* Rom. 8. *I will lay me down and sleep in peace,* Psa. 14. 8. Moreover, he provideth against the greatest wants, by the laying up for a spending time. There was not a man to be found in all *Egypt* so wise as *Joseph*, who fore-seeing their want, filled the store-houses against the years of Famine. He that gathereth his meat in the Summer, saith *Solomon*, is wise, *Prov.* 10. 5. Consider the time of youth is your Summer; old-age, a sick-bed, is not a gathering, but a spending time, and you are not wise, wise towards God, wise for your precious soules, that do not make it your business to Trade, and lay up a

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ſtock and ſtore againſt that time: Many a ſilly ſoul like the wanton Graſhopper, leaps and ckips, chirps and ſings all the Summer, and when the Winter cometh periſheth for want: But the truly ſerious and conſidering ſoul, like the laborious Bee or Ant, toils and labours in the Summer: And that man might put off ſloth, and learn his duty, and ſo provide for time to come, *Solomon* ſends him to the Ant, *Go to the Ant thou ſluggard, conſider her wayes, and be wiſe, which provideth her meat in the Summer, and gathereth her food in Harveſt*, Prov. 6. 6, 8. And ſo the wiſe in heart, that trade for eternity, lay up, the beſt ſupplies againſt the evil day which are the favour of God, an intereſt in Chriſt, pardon of ſin, peace of conſcience, a ſtock of prayers, rich and choice experiences, and love-tokens of their fathers favour, the evidences for their heavenly Country. This is the hidden and heavenly treaſure of the godly man, who only is called the man of wiſdom, *Micah* 6. 9.

Beſides, he preventeth the worſt evils, *viz.* the guilt of ſin, the ſting of death, ſorrows of hell, terrours of Conſcience, the wrath of God, the loſs of God, his ſoul,

ſoul, and heaven. This infinite and irreparable evil or loſs he ſhall never ſuſtain, becauſe this timely conſideration of death and judgement, will be a means to fit him for it. *They that were ready went in to the Marriage*, Matth. 25. 10.

But for you that are careleſs of your immortal ſouls, that think not of death, that will not conſider your latter end (if infinite mercy doth not ſpeedily prevent) you will certainly dye without wiſdom, if you do not ſeaſonably ſecure your ſouls, make God and Chriſt your friends (while the poor people of God lay up a treaſure in heaven, a good foundation againſt the time to come.) *You will treaſure up wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God*, Rom. 2. 5. And this is the doleful caſe of many worldly wiſe men, & of thoſe too whoſe office and imployment is to keep (if it might be) others alive, *viz.* to cure diſeaſes and prevent death. It is obſerved concerning *Paracelſus*, a great Phyſitian, a man very skilful in Chymical Experiments, that he bragged and boaſted, that he had attained to ſuch wiſdom in diſcerning the conſtitutions of men, and in ſtudying remedies, that whoſoever

soever did follow his rules, and keep his directions, should never dye by any disease, casually he might, and of age he must, but he would undertake to secure his health against diseases. A bold and most presumptuous undertaking: But he who by Art promised to protect others, could not by his art make himself a protection in the prime of his age, who died before, or when he had lived but thirty years.

Poor mortals! sith that thou cant prevent death, it is your wisdome to prepare for it, and forasmuch as you cannot by any means, power or skill, keep off the stroak of death, get while you may a remedy or Antidote against the sting of Death, that when you dye you may not dye unpreparedly, or dye without wisdom. *For man in honour that understandeth not, is like the beast that perisheth*, Psal. 49. 20. So died that miserably mistaken rich man, who (though by himself or others judged wise) in the account of the only wise God was a very fool: who providing only for the time of life, and not for death, did deserve the name of *thou fool*, This night shall thy soul be requir'd, Lu. 12. 20. a dark and dreadful night indeed,

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in which he loſt both worlds at once, earth and heaven too. And will you ſay, that you are wiſe, and not conſider what your end will be. The five Virgins are called fooliſh Virgins; but why? becauſe they did not make proviſion for the Bridegroom's coming, and when they came to the Door it was ſhut upon them; ah! ſad and dreadful diſappointment, *Mat.* 25. 10.

But the diligent and prepared ſoul, that hath gotten in his oyl, and made all ready, is in a capacity to look upon Death with a ſmiling aſpect, becauſe the deadly poyſon and ſting is out, and it can but kill the body, 'tis not able to hurt the ſoul: But the ſleepy ſecure ſinner will be dreadfully ſurprized as *Belſhazzar* was by the hand writing that appeared on the wall, the terrifying and amazing ſight of which changed his countenance, and troubled his thoughts, ſo that neither his Wine, his wives, or Concubines could comfort him: who had lifted up himſelf againſt the Lord of Heaven, *Dan.* 5.

Sinners! Conſider the King of terrours is a terrible ſight, and none more, then to thoſe that have their heaven here,

it will be to such as the tearing their caul from their very hearts, worse then cutting off a Member from the body; for many have suffered the loss of Members, to save their lives; *O death, death, death, how bitter, bitter, is the remembrance of thee to the man that is at ease in his possession.* And let me tell you, evils and dangers, by how much the more sudden and unexpected they are, by so much the more dreadful and astonishing they are. What a sad and hidious cry was there in *Egypt*, when at midnight God smote their first-born, and also when the Earth opened her mouth and swallowed up *Korah* and his cursed company, that went down alive into the pit, insomuch that all *Israel* fled at the cry of them, for they said, lest the earth swallow us up also, *Numb.* 16. 31, 32, 34. And how terrible was that sudden shower of fire and brimstone upon filthy *Sodom*, after a bright Sun-shine morning, *Gen.* 19. 23, 34. So when grim and ghastly Death cometh in a black night, and draweth the curtain, and looketh upon the secure sinner, it will be very formidable, for who can look Death in the face, that dare not look God or his own conscience in the

face?

face? But the sincerely godly man, fitted for death, may look and live above the fear of Death, and Hell, and welcome Death, as old *Jacob* did the Waggons, that his son *Joseph* sent to fetch him down to *Egypt*; when he saw the waggons the spirit of *Jacob* their Father revived, *Gen.* 46.27. Death, though a grim Porter, will open the gate of Glory to every Beleiver, and let them into their Fathers house, for both life and death are theirs, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. *Blessed are the dead, that dye in the Lord*, Rev. 14. 13. *To me to live is Christ, and to dye is gain*, Phil. 1. 11. *Whoso is wise will observe these things.* These are the reasons why your latter end must be considered.

The application.

If it be a duty so necessary to mind your end, I shall descend to improve it by way of Application.

Use. This calls aloud unto all you unconverted sinners that have made no preparation for Death and Judgement, to stand and wonder, or to sit down and ad-

admire at the unwearied patience, the matchleſs and amazing mercy of the infinitely gracious and glorious God.

Hath the moſt righteous judge, and ſin-revenging God, held your ſouls in life, and kept you from death and Hell to this very day? And will you not, even to aſtoniſhment, adore the unſearchable riches of grace? Men commonly wonder at things above their reach, or that for which they can give no reaſon, and eſpecially at rare, ſingular and unmerited mercy. Now ſtop a little, and ſpend a few ſerious thoughts, and conſider what reaſon can be given that you ſhould be numbred among the living, when ſo many are dead; that you ſhould be in the world, and ſo many thouſands of Men, Women, and Children in their Graves, and their precious ſouls you know not where. Now that your bodies are not laid up in that dark and diſmal priſon of the Grave, and your dear never-dying ſouls, bound, fettered, and chained in that direful, painful, priſon of hell, is matter of the greateſt wonder in all the world. Have you not cauſe to doubt, that many of your neighbours, relations, and ſinful companions & accquaintance are gone

down

down thither, & it may be ſome of thoſe you leaſt ſuſpect. And you know not how many are now in flames for the very ſame ſins that you ſtand guilty of, if not leſs ſinners then your ſelves. O admire and bleſs God with your whole ſouls, that you are yet on this ſide the grave, and not gone down into that place of torment; you enjoy many opportunities for your ſouls, and are ſtill exhorted to part with ſin, to turn to God, to accept of Chriſt, to think of death and hell, that ſo you might never ſee it or feel it, for there is much more in the paines of hell, and wrath of God, then ever you heard, or can imagine. According to thy fear ſaid *Moſes*, ſo is thy wrath, *Pſal.* 90. 11.

Poor ſinners! you are ſtill the living Monuments of infinite kindneſs, and therefore let not the living man complain. Suppoſe you had dyed when death ſeemed neer, when you were ſick and weak, ready to give up the ghoſt, or when thoſe many thouſands dyed by the Plague or Sword, in what a miſerable condition had your ſouls been, to be ſhut up with Devils and damned ſpirits in that Lake that burneth with fire and brim-

brimstone. And will you still maintain your enmity, encrease iniquity, and even dare God to damn you. Sinners, are you not besides your selves, yea stark mad, to make God that should be your best friend your worst so, for if his anger be kindled but a little, it will burn to the lowest hell, and none can quench it or stand before it. *Can thine heart endure, or thine hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee?* Ezek. 22. 14. Who can dwell with devouring fire, *who would* (saith the Lord) *set the bryars and therns against me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them up together*, Isa. 27. 4. O when will you come to your selves, and throw away your arms, and consider your souls; or will you not be saved? when shall it once be? why will you dye? Let these cords of love draw you, and cause you to say, *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.*

Consider, others dreadful ruine hath been your warning, that are now lockt up in that dark dungeon, and shall come up no more, and whom the Devils are now tormenting, the worm biting, and the fire burning. You are at present free from that boyling Chaldron, and in the

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Land of the Living, O praiſe, praiſe the Lord for his long-ſuffering, you being but as it were under a repreive; O prize, and improve your life, and timely prepare for death, for if thy life were ended, thy ſoul ſeperated, and not peace with God made, thou wert an undone ſoul: There's no place for repentance in the Grave, no Chriſt or pardon to be obtained in hell. Bleſs God, your glaſs runeth, your Lamp burneth, the day of grace is yet continued, your dear Lord is upon the Mercy-ſeat, therefore there is hope.

Uſe 2. This juſtly reprehendeth all that ſlight or neglect this great duty, but eſpecially theſe three ſorts: neither of which do ſeriouſly conſider their latter end:

Viz. { 1. *The inſolent Atheiſtical Senſualiſts.*
2. *The Ignorant and conſiderate.*
3. *The Self conſident & preſumptuous.*

1. It condemneth *Atheiſtical ſenſualiſts*, that put the evil day far from them, *Amos* 6. 3. and who drown or baniſh the awful thoughts of God, Death and Eter-

ternity out of our minds and hearts? They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ, and ſay unto God, depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledg of thy wayes, *Job* 21. 12, 24. God is not in all their thoughts, *Pſal.* 10. 14. They are reſolved for a ſhort life and a merry, what ever the dreadful iſſue. They chant to the ſound of the Viol, and drink wine in bowls, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and ſtretch themſelves upon their Couches, ſaying, in their hearts, as that wretch, *Luk.* 12. 19. take thine eaſe, eat, drink and be merry: they will ſatisfie their luſts, injoy the pleaſures of the fleſh, walk in the wayes of their heart, and in the ſight of their eyes, and hereby they make the breach wider, and themſelves ſeven times more the children of the Devil, though at laſt they ſit down in everlaſting ſorrow. *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we dye.*

You poor deſperately deluded ſouls! did you beleive what you have read and heard of the other world, or what the Scripture of infallible verity ſpeaketh of the infinitely holy, great, and terrible God (who will in no wiſe clear the guilty)

guilty) you would quickly change your Course; did you now consider you must dye, and be judged, that in a very little time you which hear me this day, must stand before the dreadful God; would you sin so freely, love the world so immoderately, mock at a Deity, jeer at serious piety, neglect your Duty, trifle away your time, forget eternity, and hazard those your precious souls as you have done and do? Such Rake hels and devils incarnate the Apostle speaketh of, 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. *Know this first*, i. e. *before the end of the world*: *There shall come in the last dayes scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying where is the promise of his coming?* Nevertheless these Vipers, vile miscreants, and monsters in mens shape, think that they are wise, when indeed they have no understanding. Wise they are, but it is to do evil, to cavil against the truth, dispute against the life of holiness, but to do good they have no knowledg, *Jer.* 4. 22.

This was *Jerusalems* great sin immediately before the fierce anger of the Lord came upon them; and this is the sad and dreadful case of many, yea thousands in the world, and in these Nations; not-

notwithstanding all those awakening desolating providences, and amazing spectacles of mortality their eyes have seen.

There are but a few that look upon themselves as concerned at all, just like a company of simple sheep in a fat pasture. The Butcher cometh and fetcheth one to Day, another to morrow, the rest feed on, and take no notice of what is become of their lost companions. 'Tis as if a company of condemned persons (reprievd for a time) should be appointed to be executed one after another, within the space of so many Dayes. This Day the first in order is brought forth and executed, the day following a second, yet all the rest that are to take their turnes, fall a Drinking, Carding, Singing, Swearing, and so continue to the very last, until they be all Hang'd, Dead, and Damn'd. We may compare this mad deluded world, to a company of poor blind men dancing about the brink of a very dangerous deep pit, but do not perceive it, or see how each falleth in one after the other; a first, second, and third drops down, the rest not discerning the danger runs the round: I shall thus apply it. This day or hour a Swearer tom-

tumbleth down to hell. The next a drunkard. This evening or morning the pale horse mounteth one, it may be a cursed Atheist, or a malitious bloody persecutor, or a filthy Adulterer, or an unjust extortious worldling, and carrieth him to the place of Darkness. The next day he receiveth his Commission to fetch some more of them; those their brethren in iniquity that are left behinde, keep and continue their course, and dance about the pit, not considering they so must die, and come to judgement. How little do the living lay to heart this great business of their Mortality, insomuch that when they would deny a thing with greatest confidence, they will commonly say they thought no more of it then of their dying day, as if death were not a matter of any moment, but rather a meer toy, or trifle, not to be regarded. *She remembred not her last end*, Lam. 1. 9.

You self destroying sinners! Do you know that you must dye and leave the world for ever, and are you so stupified, and mad, as not to think of Death in many dayes together, yea, hardly to entertain a serious thought of death and judgment at a house of mourning; in the ve-

ry ſight of the dead you can be vain, frothy, jeſt, pot, pipe, feaſt, diſcourſe of the world; a ſad proof that men do not conſider their latter end. Some at that ſolemn and ſad ſeaſon, ſeem a little ſerious, but as ſoon as the dead Corps is removed, and the Grave and Coffin out of ſight, Death is no more remembred. To make you ſenſible of this folly, let me reaſon with you in a few plain hints.

What, no thoughts of death, you that have been under a ſentence of death, and brought to the very pits brink, looking into Eternity! Oh how ſad is it to think how quickly thoſe thoughts and impreſſions of your mortallity have worn out and paſt away! Sinner, remember and forget not thoſe ſecret vows, promiſes, and engagements you then made to God, (*viz.*) that you would part with ſin, leave your wicked company, ſet looſe to the world, live godly, and make it your buſineſs to be religious, and looſe no more of your precious time and opportunities for your ſoul. If you have forgotten it, the all-ſeeing and heart-ſearching God remembers it. Know and conſider in thy heart, that death that did but warn thee

then,

then, by ſending his ſummons, will ſhortly come himſelf.

Forgetful of Death! and made of duſt, born of a woman, and under a Decree not to be revoked by men or Angels! *Heb.* 6. 27. *Job* 14. 3. *As for man, his dayes are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou haſt appointed his bounds, that he cannot paſs.*

Not mind your death! you that have ſickly, weak, diſeaſed bodies, full of paines and aches, that are ſo many partial quotidian deaths; yea a dying daily? What, put off the thoughts of death! thou that haſt been at ſo many Funerals, heard ſo many paſſing Bells or Knells, ſeen ſo many Graves, Skuls, and Coffins before thine eyes! Forget your death! and yet ſinners, and ſinning daily, carrying the cauſe and ſting of death in your boſoms! *mors in corpore*, the body is dead becauſe of ſin, *Rom.* 8. 11. Thy body is but a body of death, ſin hath kill'd it, the ſentence is paſt, *Gen.* 3. *The wages of ſin is death, Rom.* 6. 1. *The ſoul that ſins muſt dye, Ezek.* 18. 20. What put off this evil Day! and dead in part, old and cold, having one foot in the grave, *viz.* feeble knees, trembling hands, wrinkled faces,

gray or bald heads, the grave being ready for you? What, no more serious thoughts of death! and so many pieces and parcels of your selves gone before to this long home; so many Relations and Children now asleep in the dust of death? are they buried in perpetual oblivion, never to be remembred any more?

What Sinner! What not think of Death! and Death at thy very heels, and before thine eyes, whither can you direct your eyes, and not see that which preacheth or representeth Death? all the Winter Death is on the Trees, in our Gardens, in every flower; At your Table every day you feed on the flesh of dead Creatures, to tell you that you must die; and is not death in your beds every night? what is sleep but the picture and image of cold Death? and your beds but the representation of your dark graves?

O careless besotted sinners! not consider of death! and have precious souls, that must live or die, be saved or damned to Heaven or Hell; to bliss or burning, to God or Devils, to Saints or cursed Reprobates, as soon as the breath is gon, which may be the next day or hour?

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this pale horſe death, hath the red horſe Hell following him, *Rev.* 6. 8. Laſtly, what not think of, and prepare for Death! and called Chriſtians, that profeſs you beleive the Reſurrection of the body, and life everlaſting, a happineſs beyond the Grave, *For in this life only* (ſaith *Paul*) *we have hope in Chriſt, we are of all men moſt miſerable*, 1 Cor. 15. 19.

Poor hardned ſinners! that now forget God, and this great and mighty concern of your eternal ſouls, what will you do in the day of Viſitation? when your iniquities ſhall compaſs you about, and no friend in heaven above, or in earth beneath, that can ſtand you in ſtead; and when conſcience, like a bold ſturdy Sergeant, ſhall take you by the throat, and ſummon you in the Name of the great Judge, to come and ſtand at or before the judgement ſeat. *Underſtand ye bruiſh among the people, and ye fools, when will ye be wiſe?* Pſal. 94 8. to underſtand this, to provide for your latter end.

2. This blames the *ignorant petiſh and conſiderate ſoul*, who in an angry fit or paſſion wiſheth for death out of a baſe end, *viz.* as a writ of eaſe, or out-let to

preſent pain, poverty, ſickneſs, and other worldly troubles and perplexities, not rightly conſidering how terrible death is, or what are the dreadful conſequences of it. Now that we may be convinced of this ſin and folly, give me leave to tell you, that between the worſt, longeſt, and deepeſt miſeries and calamities of this life, and thoſe after death, there is no proportion, but an exceeding diſtance.

Poor deluded ſouls! what is the bite of a flea, to the ſting of a Serpent? or a ſcratch on the hand, to a ſtab at the heart? what's the heat and ſmart of a little candle, to a hot fiery furnace, or a devouring flame? What's a drop of gall, to a Sea, or Ocean of poyſon? or what is pain, torture or anguiſh for an hour, to intollerable miſery time without end, into which to the unconverted death will certainly be the door? and are you ſo mad to imagine that there is nothing in the other world to be feared, or felt worſe then outward preſſures, perils, pains, which are but bodily miſeries, and that but for a moment? This ſin not only the prophane world are guilty of, but ſome of thoſe that profeſs the Name of God. *Rebecah* ſaid to *Iſaac*, *I am weary of my life*,

life because of the Daughters of Heth, Gen 27. 46. *Rachel* cryes out, *give me Children, or else I dye*, Gen. 30. 1. *Elisha* being threatned by *Jezabel* said, *O Lord, take away my life*, 1 *Kings* 19. 4. *Jonah* for the loss of a poor gourd, said, *its better for me to dye then to live*, and told God to his very face, that *he did well to be angry, even unto death*, Jonah 4. 9. The *Israelites* when they wanted water wisht they had died in the wilderness. These and the like wicked wishes are in the mouths of many poor ignorant, discontented persons, who long to be out of this wretched world.

Now by way of conviction, I shall lay down these following particulars.

1. What think you of these inward, and soul-straits, and conflicts with which Gods poor afflicted people are sadly exercis'd. And were you but sensible of the guilt and weight of sin, a wounded spirit, the wrath of God, and those everlasting burnings; it would quickly swallow up your outward miseries, though never so many. This is evident in the example of the Jaylor, who for the loss of his prisoners was so tormented, that he would have kill'd himself before

he was convinced of the dreadful state of his soul that was in danger of ruin, *Act.* 16. 27, 28, 29, 30. *Then he fell, and cried out, Sirs, what shall I do to be saved?*

2. To wish for death, because of the evils attending this life, is very wicked, and dangerous, interpretatively, and in effect it is to wish your souls in hell.

Consider and mind this also, that your present sorrowes, crosses, troubles, of what kind or degree soever they be, are the fruits of your ill-doings, and fat less then you deserve, for its a wonder you are not in hell! and will you dare to be so audacious, as to flye in the face of your faithful Creator, when you should be deeply sensible of your horrible wickedness, and humble under Gods hand, and accepting of the punishment of your sin ye should repent and turn to God take away the cause, and the effect will cease.

3. You can please and gratifie the Devil your deadly adversary in nothing more; you wish for death, so doth the devil too; if you are his now, you must be his then; his here, and his for ever: He waits, and longs that your breath were gone, your souls separated, therefore he would have you poyson, hang, drown,

drown, ſtarve, or ſtob your ſelves that you might be dead, damn'd and burn'd with him in hell.

4. Moreover, if you were dead you would ſuddenly repent, and change your mind, and, if it might be, give the world to be alive again, with all the wants, pains, and greif you now endure. Had you but a peeping hole into hell, to ſee and here what they endure, you would confeſs your ſins, judge your ſelves, and cloſe with Chriſt before you dye, that ſo you might not come into that dreadful place of torment. Now that you may hear, and fear, and do no more ſo wickedly, Let me ask you,

1. What think you of the ſting and bitterneſs of death, when a man comes to dye, Conſcience being awakened, roaring like a Lyon, death the King of terrours ſtanding by, when the guilt of paſt ſins and loſs of precious time, will be as ſo many fiery darts, and ſtinging ſcorpions, biting and gnawing on the heart? What think you it will be to dye unconverted, to dye in a ſtate of ſin, and wrath, a Traitor to God, in a ſtate of unbelief and impenitency (the ſoul-damning ſins) to dye with an evil heart, an accuſing conſcience,

ence, ſelf condemn'd, caſt in your own breaſt, to dye, which is worſt of all.

2. What think you of the ſadneſs and amazing terrour of approaching judgment, the ſecond death, when a man comes to take a dreadful view of the other world, and begins to reflect and think. Wherefore was I born, what have I been doing, are all theſe my ſins? O where ſhall I leave them? or how ſhall I be rid of them, now I am dying? whither am I going? what will be my company? where ſhall be the place? and how near am I to it? what muſt I endure? and how long? how long? and conſcience will anſwer, to all eternity, miſery without end. This will amaze, confound and overwhelm the ſoul with fear, and perturbation, when it ſees that heaven is loſt, and that it muſt down, down to the Region of darkneſs, and company of Devils, in that ſtate of everlaſting wo. The killing thoughts of which made a great man wiſh, that he might live, though but the life of a Toad.

3. What think you of the impartiality of the Judge, that will not ſpare the guilty, muſt and will Judge and ſentence according to the fact, and reward every man

man according to his works? He would not ſpare the Angels that ſinn'd, but caſt them down to hell, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. nor *Adam*, but caſt him out of paradiſe, and ſet a flaming ſword againſt him, neither will he ſpare any impenitent ſinner in the day of his wrath; juſtice obliges him to juſtifie the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

4. What think you of the impoſſibility of having any appeal? There will be no *Moſes* to mediate, no mediator to plead, no *Daniel*, *Noah*, or *Job* to intercede or to ſtand in the gap, not an Interceſſor in Earth or Heaven to be found to ſpeak a word. There can be no appeal to God, his Calls and Councels have been refuſed, his Intereſt oppoſed, his Enemies countenanced, his laws violated, his Anger will burn like fire. No appeal to Jeſus Chriſt, his Government hath been ſlighted, his Grace and Perſon rejected or to the Holy Ghoſt, he hath been quencht and greived: or to angels or Saints; all will be againſt you.

5. What think you of the reſignation of ſoul and body to the executioner and tormentor, the red dragon? 'tis ſad to ſee a poor malefactor committed to the

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Jaylor or Hangman, but O how much more dreadful will it be for ever-living ſouls in the face of men and Angels, to be delivered into the hands of that raging, roaring Lyon, the Devil? When God the righteous Judge ſhall ſay in ſight of the whole world, here are the men that brak my Statutes, prophaned my Sabbaths, that hated my Saints, that ſerved the Devil, in the ſatisfying their Luſts, the open and profeſſed Adverſaries to my Name and Intereſt, that would not, though I often intreated them, come at my call, accept of my love, receive my Son, or endure a life of holineſs, or by any means be drawn and perſwaded to think of and prepare for death and judgement, though they had time and opportunity enough: Now take them devil, and away to hell with them; for my ſoul abhors them. Thy Covenant ſervants and voluntary ſlaves they were in time, and thy priſoners in chains of darkneſs they ſhall be eternity, to be tormented day and night for ever. *Rev.* 20, 10.

6. What think you of eternal baniſhment and ſeparation from God, Chriſt, Angels, Saints, Heaven? This is the

the punishment of loss, and the worst of hell, *Matth.* 25, 41. *Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels: O terrible, terrible!* to be doom'd or sentenc'd to lye under the wrath and hatred of the infinitely great and dreadful God for ever and ever, as long as God shall live, whose being is to eternity, as long as there is a Devil to torment, or to be tormented, shall their plagues last. The fearful and unbeleiving, and the abominable, Murderers, Whoremongers, Lyars, Dogs, Sorcerers, carry all their sins down to hell with them, the fuel that feeds the wrath of God, so that the Oyl of sin causes the Lamp of wrath to burn & flame everlastingly. The debt of sin can never be paid, justice never satisfied, for the damn'd soul remains impenitent, and God implacable, so that there can be no hope of pardon. The sentence is strict, unchangeable, irreversable, eternal. O eternity! eternity! this stings, plagues, and augments, and aggravates the most intollerable punishment of the damn'd. After an innumerable thousands of years they shall think it but the beginning of their sorrows, and shall be

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so far from an end, as if they had been in hell but an hour. It will be everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power, 2 *Thes.* 1, 9. In comparison of which, all the rendings, rackings, tearings, torturings of mens bodies here, by the most exquisite torments upon racks, gibbets, wheels grid-irons, boyling lead, boyling oyl, and other bloudily invented engines and instruments of amazing cruelty, are but a flea-biting.

Sinners! 'tis *hell, hell,* that will make the sadly tormented soul seek death, wish, and long for that which shall never be, *Rev.* 9. 6. And will you desire and wish for the woeful day? God forbid! now your condition may be changed, then it will be stated. *Wo, wo* unto you that desire the day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? *The day of the Lord is darkness, and not Light,* Amos 5. 18. *A day of gloominess, a day of clouds, and of thick darkness, at which the people shall be much pained, and all faces shall gather blackness, the inhabitants of the Land shall tremble, for the day of the Lord is very terrible,* Joel 2. Now therefore do not wickedly wish it, but wisely consider and prepare

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for it. And blessed is that servant whom when his Lord cometh, findeth so doing.

3. It reproves the *self-confident and presumptuous*, who conclude upon a fitness and preparedness for death and judgment upon very slight and unwarrantable grounds, namely, because they separate from the notoriously wicked, are not prophane, make a profession, shew some legal sorrow for sin, run the round of duty, though carnal and heartless enough in those duties, from hence they easily perswade themselves that all is well, *viz.* That they are the Children of God, in a state of grace, and going to Heaven, and as fit to dye as the very best. How many thousands are there in the Christian world, that securely sleep and dream of an interest in Christ, that hope and promise themselves a future and glorious felicity, who are but meer moral men, and worse, or rotten painted Hypocrites at the best, having only a form of Godliness, restraining, coun-

counterfeit, or common grace? Such were the Scribes and Pharisees, & the foolish Virgins, & yet confident to the very last; they came to the door with *Lord, Lord, open unto us.* They had blazing Lamps, but no oil in their Lamps or Vessels, no real union with Jesus Christ, no precious faith, no sincere love or evangelical repentance, the root of the matter was not in them.

You that have a name to live, take heed you be not deceived; if you are not truly united unto Jesus Christ, he will certainly disown you. The Lord Jesus tells us of such sadly deluded souls, that shall stand up at the last day, and challenge a reward in Heaven, to whom he will protest, *I know you not, Matth.* 7. 23. they never savingly knew him, had never any union or communion with Christ in the world. Many are called, but few chosen, the Children of the kingdome (saith Christ) shall be cast out. And I must tell you, who-ever comes to heaven, will miss many there which they thought to find, and find others there they little expected. The Sinners in *Sion* are more then a few, the Goates more

more then the Sheep, the Tares more then the Wheat, more reprobate silver then pure tryed gold. The pure in heart and truly godly man that mourns and bleeds for sin, that loves God, and prizes Christ above the world, is many times full of feares and doubts about his soul, and the eternal condition of it: O what would he not give to be assured that all is well between God and him? to know that God and Christ is his, that he is fit to live or die, because a mistake here is very dreadful, and of an infinite consequence? But on the contrary, the foolish, disobedient, and that are deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in sin, and alienated from the life of God, having no hope, and without God in the world, are highly confident, and strongly perswaded that it shall go well with them in the world to come. I knew a poor ignorant prophane wretch, being told on his death bed (and but a little before he entred into eternity) that death was come, replied, where is it, i'le go forth and meet it? putting his legs over the beds side, in a little time gave up the Ghost. Therefore in this great soul-

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affair, let none be so fool-hardy, as to trust without tryal. *But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoycing in himself, and not in another, for every man shall bear his own burthen*, Gal. 6. 4, 5.

Quest. If the consideration of our latter end is a matter of such moment, *why do men and women that have immortal souls think no more of it?*

Answ. 1. The great cause is from that horrid cursed atheism and unbelief, which is deeply rooted and riveted in mens minds and hearts. They do not credit that wonderful and astonishing Doctrin of the other world, according to the belief of which they must live or die to all eternity.

If we should take a serious prospect of endless eternity, & of those great things men seem to beleive, namely, that they must dye, that in every mans body there is a never dying soul, that there will be a different and unchangeable estate of men after death, and that without holiness, real holiness of heart & life, no man shall see the Lord; and compare the lives and practises of those that pretend to beleive these things, & we may see them as blasse

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as a company of Ants in a sunny day; and that the general course of men, hath no tendency towards this end, but indeed a sad and woeful incongruity.

2. The second cause is want of spiritual and divine wisdom. It was for want of that wisdom which is from above that the *Israelites* did not consider, *O that they were wise!* said God. *They are a Nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them*, Deut. 32. 28. If men were wise for their precious and eternal souls, they would consider what is here to be done, and what is like to be their condition in the other world. The prudent man fore-seeth the evil, or considereth the evil, and hideth himself. When God by the mouth of *Moses*, threatned to plague the *Egyptians* by the Pestilence, Haile, and Fire, he that believed and feared the word of the Lord, amongst the servants of *Pharoah*, made his servants and cattel flee into the house, and were preserved, *Exod.* 9. 20. So the soul that is truly wise to consider of the danger of being destroyed by the grievous hail and fire of Gods wrath, will flee into the hiding place *viz.* under the wing of the great and glorious Mediator, where alone there is true

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ſuccour. But he that did not fear or conſider of the danger, left his ſervants and cattle in th field, and were deſtroyed, *Exod.* 9. 21, 25.

3. The third hindrance is ſenſuality, worldly pleaſures, and cares, theſe carry away the heart from the true conſideration. The *Iſraelites* confluence of creature-comforts, cauſed them to forſake and to forget God, *Deut.* 32. 14. 15, 16, 17 18. The old world was eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, not conſidering of their danger till the flood came and took them all away, *Matth.* 24. 38, 39. The men of the earth do ſo mind earthly things, that their hearts are ſurfeited and drunken with the care of it, *Luke* 21. 34. And while mens minds and thoughts are carri'd ſo vehemently after the world to make proviſion for their life, they can think but little of their death, *Luk.* 12. 15, 16, 17, 18.

4. The fourth obſtruction, is a plague upon the heart, and deſperate ſecurity proceeding from it. No bonds nex to death are ſo ſtrong to keep men under, as ſecurity and ſenſleſneſs of Spirit. So dead a ſleep poſſeſeth

seth more of the ungodly world, that they are past feeling, and become so stark dead, that the voice of God in the dreadful threatnings of his word, and the alarum of his amazing tremendous judgement, and desolating providences prevail not to awaken them. The Lord hath poured out upon them the spirit of a deep sleep, and hath (in judgement) closed their eyes that they can sin in the very face of the Judge, at the very brink of hell, at the very mouth and entrance into that great gulf of Eternity.

5. A fifth hindrance to mens consideration of their latter end, is a strong delusion of heart, or satanical suggestions. The old serpent, and desperatively deluded hearts, make them dream that God is all love, that they shall have a long life, that preparation for death and *Eternity* is a short work; and that it may be done at any time, namely, when they have done with the world, when they are old, or lying on a sick bed. They say in their hearts, 'tis but beleiving or repenting, and saying, Lord have mercy upon me, let me die the death of the righteous. Under this

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deadly deluſion they dream of heaven, and go laughing to hell, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 3.

And that which doth much encreaſe this ſtupidity, may be the want of, or neglect of a powerful and ſoul ſearching miniſtry, whoſe office, as watchmen, is to foreſee the danger, and to warn and awaken ſecure ſinners, crying aloud to them in the name of the Lord, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light*, Epheſ. 5. 14. But ſom cannot endure that Miniſters ſhould be ſo ſevere, plain and peircing in their Doctrin, ſo as to thunder and lighten in the eyes and ears of ſleepy ſouls; They are well contented to ſit under thoſe that daub with untempered mortar, and who ſow pillows for their arm-holes, under whoſe miniſtry they may take a nap and ſleep it out. But they hate him that reproveth in the Gate, that galls, cuts, and wounds their Conſciences, juſt like the gall'd-backt horſe, that bites and kicks at him that would heal him.

A perſon of no mean quality ſpeaking his opinion of ſeveral miniſters, ſaid, ſuch a man I can hear, and ſuch a one I can hear very well, but for the third he mentio-

mentioned, that was wont to lay the ax to the root of the Tree, and grapple with the heart; I cannot endure to hear him, for he alwayes gtates upon my conſcience.

6. Men do not conſider their latter end, becauſe they are afraid to do it,

1. Firſt, to wanton ſinners, the remembrance of death is a bitter Pill that will not ſuffer the pleaſures of ſin to go down ſo ſweetly. Therefore they ſay to the thoughts of Death, as the Governour to *Paul*, *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient ſeaſon I will ſend for thee.* Serious thoughts of death and Judgement to come, as the hand-writing on the wall, will damp the ſpirits, and mar the mirth of the greateſt Prince or gallant in the world.

2. They fear to think of death, becauſe they have made no preparation for it, (*viz*) They have not believed, repented, liv'd a life of holineſs, ſo as to make God their friend. A banktupt that oweth many hundred pounds more then he is worth, is afraid to caſt up his Accompts; ſo poor and impenitent ſinners, that are indebted to God, that owe him ten thouſand ta-

talents, are unwilling to think of death, because death will say unto them, come give an account of your Stewardship, for you must pay the utmost farthing.

3. They are afraid to think of death, by reason of the dreadful consequences of death, as it relates to both worlds. The change that death makes as to this present world, is very amazing.

1. It brings unavoidable dissolution or separation of soul and body; these two dear companions, that have lived and conversst together, and sin'd together for many years, must then part, and a living man will become a dead Carcase, fit for nothing but a grave, and the soul must have another habitation, *Job* 17. 13, 14. *Job* 19. 26. Well might Death be called the King of terrours.

2. It is matter of fear to leave this world that hath been so pleasing and delightsom, and for which we have toyl'd and labour'd so many years, in one night to loose it all! For when the departing hour cometh, you may take a view of all your comforts which you have had under the Sun, and helps for heaven,

heaven, (*viz.*) Husbands, Wives, Parents, Children, Kinsfolk, Friends, jolly Companions, Gold, Silver, Houses, Lands, sweet and delicate Banquets, pleasing Bargains, and say, we must now part, farewell for ever: We shall never see or enjoy you more, we shall never eat, drink, or converse more, buy or sell more: all our fleshly and sensual delights are ended; our joy, our mirth is ceased, and all the blessed advantages for our salvation now will terminate. Farewel the means of grace, and all the golden opportunities for our souls, farewell all those faithful Ministers that we have heard, farewel all those powerful awakening Sermons that have sounded in our ears, farewell all the blessed Sabbaths, farewell all the Counsels, Examples, Reproofs, Prayers of our serious and religious friends and Relations, we shall never see the face of a Minister more, or hear a Sermon more, never have the door of grace and life opened to us any more for ever. And what remains, but a doleful remembrance of those good things that are past and gone, and a severe strict account that is yet behind?

O dreadful change and loss indeed to

them that make the world their home, that have their heaven on this side heaven, and no provision or portion beyond the grave. The thoughts of which made a wicked young man (very thriving in the world) to utter these words, *If I live I shall be a rich man, but this is the plague of it I must die*; which accordingly came to pass not long after.

3, No wonder death is so terrible, for after death the judgement. Death is a Purservant that summons guilty souls to come and give an account at Gods dreadful bar. And what more terrible to the Malefactor then the sight and presence of an angry Judge. While *Paul* reasoned of judgment, *Felix* trembled, and bid him be gone; that Doctrine did so gall him that he could not endure it, *Acts* 24. 25.

Use 2. The second use is to exhort, perswade, and stir you up, to put this duty of so great and infinite concernment into practice. O Sirs, I beseech you to entertain some timely thoughts of your dying hour, that death and you may be more familiar. The best friend you have in heaven and earth longs to see it done, *O that there were such an heart in them!* Now if you

you would do any thing in this blessed work (*viz.*) to prepare for death and judgement, it must be done, 1. *Suddenly*, 2. *Seriously*, 3. *Effectually*.

1. It must be done *suddenly*, its a business of that importance that must not be neglected or delayd for a moment of time. Did you but see that you are upon the confines of eternity, and in danger every day of being undone for ever, you would quickly come to a resolution: To further and encourage you, consider,

1. Life (as dear and precious as it is) is very uncertain. What a nothing is this life? a wind, a vapour, a dream, a breath, a bubble.

How soon may the Thread be cut, the Glass run, or this bright burning Lamp be dim and out; when, how or where this short dying life will terminate thou dost not know? Whether at home or abroad, among thy friends or strangers, in the field or house, at thy table or in thy Bed, who can tell?

2. Death may come suddenly. When the pale horse will set forth, whether in the morning, or at mid-day, or midnight, no man can tell thee. There is a fatal hour

which none can pass, *Luk.* 12. 20. *Psal.* 73. 18. 19. *Psal.* 64. 7. 1 *Thes.* 5. 3.

3. When death comes it strikes sure. This King of terrors on the pale horse always rides the circuit, and doth execution where-ever he cometh, no shield, or buckler, or armour of proof can defend us, no not an army or guard of men or Angels. If dreadful death finds a King on his Throne, or a beggar on the dunghil, it sayl a case. The strength of man, though a *Sampson*, this great Leviathan Death counts but a straw; death doth his work speedily, easily, witness the last plague. I shall adde here.

1. Death, calls warnings and alarums are very frequent, not one of you, but have had many a call and knock to mind you of death.

2. Deaths commands are peremptory he brings his warrant along with him. Death coms in the name of the terrible Judge, & takes his Commission out of the court of heaven in order to the accomplishment and execution of an eternal & irrevocable decree, so that he must doe his work, will have his Errand: If a man had Mines of Gold and Silver to give, it cannot deliver

from the arrest of this inexorable Serjeant.

3. Deaths Conquest is great. I know thou wilt bring me to death, and the place appointed for all living. What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Thou hast set his bounds that he cannot pass. They that have conquer'd Kingdoms and Countries, and carried all before them have been subjected by death: when death comes and takes a man by the throat, though the proudest, stoutest, strongest in the world, he must go, willing or unwilling, 'tis all one to death. 'Tis observable, that of bad men, their souls are not resign'd, but taken away. What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul, *Job* 27. 8, 20. A tempest stealeth him away in the night. This night shall thy soul be required, death will not stay a night. 'Tis in vain for them that are strong and lively, to say to death, go to the wrinkled faces, to the gray heads to the pale cheeks, to the naked backs, the dry bons, to the dry breasts, meddle not with this young man, strike not this comely beautiful woman, that is in the flower and prime in nature. Go to yonder consumptive, declining decaying, dying.

dying old man, go to that weak wither'd old woman. Let me alone or be excus'd: O but death regards it not. For this great Conquerour death, knocks as often at the young mans door, as at the door of the old woman. Death arrests and carrieth away the strong, the healthy, the rich, the honourable, the learned, prisoners to the grave, as often as the weak, the sickly, the poor, the base and ignorant.

2 You are to do it *seriously*, with thy soul: The living will lay it to heart, *Eccl.* 7. 2. The dead cannot, there's no device in the grave; Then go about it now in good earnest, before old age and death cometh.

3. Do it effectually, go thorow with the work, leave it not undone, or but done to halves: let every lust be mortified, every duty performed, every grace exercis'd. As good never a whit, as never the neat. Now you have opportunity before you, the day of grace is continued, Christ is at the door, open to him, and make all sure; for if ever thou be justified, pardoned, sanctified, it must be now. The considerations to perswade you are these following.

Motive

Motive 1. Consider there's an absolute and indispensible necessity for the doing of it, a present necessity, an infinite and eternal necessity, other things may be done this must be done, and its more then time this great work were done and finished 'Tis the grand business of your life timely and truly to prepare for death and judgment. It were better that all your concerns in the world were wholly neglected namely, Husband, wife, Children, buying, selling, seed-time, harvest omitted, & let all run to ruine, then to hazard, lose and undo your souls, for this will certainly ruine body and soul for ever.

O seriously mind how little you have done in the time of your life past, and how uncapable you will be to do any thing at the end of time, when you come to take up your lodging in a grave. O remember the dayes of darkness, they will be many, *Eccl.* 1, 18. They that have been in the Grave a thousand years have done nothing, neither can you when you come there, *Eccl.* Now for you that have lived

ſome twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, or three-ſcore years, and done nothing in order to a preparation for your everlaſting ſtate; it is high time to begin the work.

The moſt of you are ſo ſenſleſs, as not to conſider, or entertain a thought of death, till you hear the Bell, or ſee a Grave or Coffin or till death comes within your walls and knocks at your beds head; when you ſee a Friend, a Child, a brother, a Husband or Wife, gaſping and dying, till you ſee him bedewed with his cold ſweats, and groaning with dying pangs; till your eyes thus affect your hearts, your hearts are ſeldom affected with the ſence of your mortality: Now ſith it muſt be done and done ſuddenly, reſolve in ſpight of men and devils, and all the world to ſet about the work.

Motive 2. Conſid. *It may be done*, you are in a capacity to do it adored for ever be free grace.

1. Time and opportunity is yet before you. The Torch burns, the Sun ſhines, yet it is day, though not morning, ſome lands

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are behind, though not a whole glass. Some of you are old, lame, deaf, but not dead; others weak, sick, languishing, but alive: If the Sun were set, the Candle out, the Glass run, farewell all hope of heaven, or of altering your condition for ever. They that are gone down to the dead and among the damned, may and do reflect with torment upon the opportunities once offered to make them happy, but can call back none: that's impossible.

2. God is willing to help if you go to him; *Thine is the power*, and he gives it to them that have no strength, *Isa.* 40. Duty is ours, assistance and success is Gods. That God who hath given you a considering season, can also give a considering soul: go to him upon thy knees, and beg as for thy life: his a speedy aid, say as the woman to *David*, *Help O King*, or as the Father for the distressed Son, *Mark* 9. 22. *If thou canst do any thing, help us*; Christ did help: 'tis his promise, seek and you shall find. But it cannot be said so of separated souls, because time and meanes from them is gone for ever.

Then in the name of the Lord, quit your selves like men. Wise men, that are endued with precious, rational, considering souls, that difference you from bruits. Let that noble faculty of reason be exerted in considering your latter end. For consideration is a serious, eager, & lively act or exercise of the understanding about things to be done, or not to be done, furthering or impeding the execution of them as it sees good. It is the exercise of the mind and heart, these are at work in this divine consideration. *Contemplatio* (as one observes) looks upon things as the eye upon the object. *Judicium* discerneth things whether good or bad; but meditation or consideration is a further inquisition into the truth. Set consideration at work, and not like bruits, suffer your eyes, ears, lusts and senses to be your guides, but commune with your hearts, consider your wayes, reflect upon your actions, look to your end; which if you did, you would not be so sensual, so sinful, as you have been and are, *Isa.* 1. 3.

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Motive 3. Consider the omitting or neglect of it, will render you the worst of fools. If the doing of it be your highest wisdom, the not doing must needs be the greatest folly; this will make you like *Ephraim*, a silly Dove without an heart. Do you know that you must die, and die but once? and will you not indeavour to do that well which cannot be done the second time? As *Luther* said to his adversaries, *You can kill me but once, ye are not able to raise me to life again, and kill me the second time*: So say I to thee, O thou secuer, sinner when thy breath is gone, it will return no more.

O consider with a trembling heart, how much depends upon this dying once, namely the gaining or losing of thy dear precious soul, the gaining or loosing of the favour of God, the fruition of God, the joyes of heaven, or the torments of hell hangs upon it.

When death comes, your eternity is cast, the very next moment after you have shot the black & amazing gulf, you shall fee

see & know what you shall be, and where you shall be to all eternity. And will you judg the men of the earth, or worldly wise men, the wisest men, who take care for the body, and neglect the soul? that make provision for time, but none for eternity? O Sirs, if you would but trace them to a sick bed, a death-bed, from thence into eternity, and to Gods dreadful tribunal, you might easily determine, *Jer.* 17. 11. *Luke* 12. 19, 20. *Luke* 16. 22, 23. *Rev.* 6. 15.

Mot. 4. *In a very little time you present, powerful and awakening helps and advantages, to excite and put you in mind of the other world, will be past and gone.* And these are chiefly three, *viz.* 1. Awakening Ordinances. 2. Awakening Providences. 3. Awakening Convictions.

1 *Awakening Ordinances* will have an end. The faithful, powerful Ministers of the Gospel that watch for your souls, and whose office it is to fire the Beacons, and give the alarum, will, we know not how soon, finish their work. These *Messengers* and Embassadours of the Lord, that preach

preach the dreadful and amazing Doctrine of death and judgement, and that with loud and earnest cries, tears and fervour of spirit, to make you sensible of your sin and danger, will shortly be called home. *Moses* that great Prophet, after he had compos'd this excellent Song (of which my Text is a part) was gathered to his Fathers. *Noah* that Preacher of Righteousness, after he had for many years together warned the old world, was called into the Ark and they had never a Sermon more, till the wrath of God came upon them, and there was no remedy; 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. Be not therefore as your Fathers, unto whom the former Prophets have cryed, saying, *Turn ye from your evil wayes, for they have not long to cry.* The Prophets do not live for ever, *Zech.* 1. 4, 5. You cannot rationally expect alwayes to hear the pleasant noise of *Aarons* Bells, or the sound of the Silver Trumpet, the Sun will go down over the Prophets: Therefore while the watchmen are upon the walls take warning, and finish your work while you have the light: O Sirs, improve for your eternal advantage those plain and powerful Sermons which you hear

and

and read, and let it not be accounted legal preaching. Who were more severe in their preaching then our Lord and his fore-runner? whom we ought to imitate, other wise we draw the horrible sin of bloud-guiltiness upon our souls, *Ezek.* 3. 18, 19. 'Tis observ'd, that there are more dreadful doctrines scatter'd up and down in the New Testament then in the Old, the powerful application of which is very necessary both for secure sinners and drowsie Saints. Holy *David*, after his fall, fell into a deep sleep and did not awake until *Nathan* came and told him plainly and particularlly of his sin. And of the Virgins we read, while the Bridegroom tarri'd they all slumbred and slept, *Mat.* 25. O how many sleepy souls are there in the world, and in many Cities, Towns and Parishes in this Nation that will either living, dying or after death, sadly bewail the not improving the labours of their faithful Pastors.

2. All your *awakening Providences*, by which God warns and calls, will have an end. The great and glorious God for a long time together hath been speaking and calling to us by his Word, and of late years.

years he hath spoken by his dreadful Rod, and that very terribly. The *Sword*, the Plague, the Fire, the decay of trade and other Judgements, are the loud voice of an angry God. Those afflictions on our Families, Relations, Estates, Persons, are in order to awakening us out of sleep, and so for our profit. When *Manasseh* was among the thorns, & bound with fetters, & carried into *Babylon*, he besought the Lord and humbled himself greatly, 2 *Chron.* 33. 11, 12, 13. After *Ephraim* was chastised, he awaked, turned and repented, for the bonds and cords of affliction do open the ear to instruction; then he sheweth them their work, and their transgression, and commandeth that they turn from iniquity, *Jer.* 6. 9, 10. *Jer.* 13, 18, 19. Now to have a deaf ear to the rod and word, to be hardned and secure, and go on in sin under awaking and amazing providences, is a dreadful judgement, & that which ripens men for ruine, 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. *This is that* King *Ahaz*, who in the time of his distress did trespass yet more against the Lord, *Jer.* 5. 3.

3. Your *awakening Convictions* will have an end too. Those secret and powerful

ful workings, strivings and struglings of the Spirit of God under the rod and in the word will be suspended. Christ will not always be at the door calling, knocking, and his Spirit that is so much greived and oppos'd, will not alwayes strive and struggle with your hearts and consciences, *Gen.* 6. 3. Now sinners, if you have any love or regard to your immortal souls, before all these helps be taken away, be wise to consider, and prepare for your end: Lest God should speedily resolve, and say to you as to the Jews, *Isa.* 1. 5. *Why should ye be stricken any more*; or as *Hosea* 4. 17. *Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone.* They will have their lusts, and they shall have them: *As I live, saith saith the Lord this iniquity shall not be purged till you die:* Sith nothing will prevail, I am resolved, saith God, they shall never hear an awakening soul-Searching Sermon more, never have a Correction or Conviction more till they go down to hell.

Motive 7. *Consider that the earnest cries tear, prayers of unbelievers, when they come*

to die, it will be in vain, fruitleſs and unſucceſsful: though you ſpeake in the anguiſh of your ſouls, and complain in the bitterneſs of your ſpirits; when your fleſh upon you ſhall have pain, and your ſouls within you ſhall mourn, it will be to no purpoſe.

You that will not ſeek God betimes, and make ſupplication to the Almighty, that will not pray while you have time to pray, helps to pray, health to pray, encouragements to pray.

Now God invites, you may have audience, and find acceptance; your prayers in a dying hour, will be but the expreſſions of your fears and terrors, ariſing from the ſence aud nearneſs of your danger, when there will be but a ſtep between your departing ſouls and the ſtate of Devils. God ſeldom hears from ſome men unleſs trouble, ſickneſs, fear, diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon them; then pain will make them pray and howl upon their beds; and 'tis but howling, not praying, *Hoſ.* 7. 14. *But will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?* ſaith *Job* 27. 9. No, ſaith the Lord, *I will not be enquired of by you*, *Ezek.* 20. 3. Becauſe it cometh from an

evil

evil mind, or ſtinking breath, proceeding from a corrupt, rotten, curſed heart, and then it muſt needs be abominable, *Prov.* 21. 27. 15. 8. I will (ſaith *David*) waſh mine hands in innocency, and then compaſs thine Altar; for if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer, *Pſal.* 66. 18. If God would not hear a *David* prayer, a man after Gods own heart, he will not hear a Devils prayer nor the prayer of a Swearer, Sabbath-breaker, Drunkard; he heareth not ſinners that like and love their luſts. No, ſaith the holy God, though they ſeek me early, they ſhall not find me. Here note, That there is a two fold early, namely, Gods early, and mans early. Gods early is in the morning of our life, in the time of youth, then God cals and invites to come, *Prov.* 1. 24. *Eccl.* 12. 1. Mans early is in the evening, or at the end of life, or when man is nigh unto death, when pain, ſorrow and anguiſh cometh upon him. In their affictions they will ſeek me early, *Hoſ.* 5. laſt When fear cometh as deſolation, and deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind, then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early but ſhall not find

find me, *Prov.* 1. 27, 28. God will say to all such sinners, remember it, as *Isaac* to *Abimelech*, Gen. 26. 27. *Wherefore come ye to me seeing you hate me, and have sent me away from you:* Or he will say, as once to the Children of *Israel*, that cryed to him in their sore distress; *Go cry to the Gods which ye have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation; as for me, I will not deliver you*, Judg. 10. 14. You have served the Devil, embrac'd the world, satisfied your lusts, joyn'd with mine enemies, go to the Devil, go to your lusts, to your wicked company, let them deliver you in your distress: Now death and devil sare come for you, I will not own you, nor your prayers, your soul abhorred me & my soul abhors you, and your prayers, depart from me, I know you not.

Motive 6. Its the great comfort of the godly mans life to hope, and know that he is fit for death. whatever be their lot and Portion in this world, be assured it shall go well with them in the other world. Art thou in a state of grace, at odds with sin

sin, and truly in love with Christ and holiness? Be of good chear, go thy way, and eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for the bitterness of death is past. The king of terrors that had the power of death is conquered by the Lord of life. Terrible death that rides on the pale horse, is dismounted by thy dear Lord that rides on the white horse, under whose bloody Cross thou mayest see him disarmed, wounded and dead; death that raigned from *Adam* to *Moses*, is now swallowed up in victory, *Isa.* 25. 8. *I will ransome thee from the power of the grave, I will redeem thee from death; O death I will be thy plagues, O grave I will be thy destruction.* The beleiving soul is dead with Christ while he lives, *Rom.* 6. 8, and is delivered, not only from the damnation of sin, but the dominion of sin, and there is hope in his death: When he dyeth he shall die in the Lord, *Rev.* 14. 13. he shall sleep in Jesus, 1 *Thes.* 4, 14. his end shall be peace, *Psal.* 37. 37. This made the Apostle after his sad conflict, *Rom.* 7. to triumph over the last enemy death, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55.

Motive

Motive 7. *If you should not prepare for death yet, you will wish you had* (as many do when it is too late.) You that are for making provision for the flesh, and so eagerly pursuing the world. When you shall be cast upon the bed of languishing, you will wish in the very torment of your minds and flames of horrour, that I had parted with my sin: O that I had been careful to please and honour God, and to get an interest in Jesus Christ! then should I have now dyed the death of the righteous; but this I wholly slighted. I prosecuted the world with might and main, and got so many thousands for my Posterity & I liv'd a merry and jovial life, but for my soul, for my eternity, things of infinite worth, I have done nothing. I forgat my soul. Now here's the Messenger of death come for me, to imprison my body in the Grave, the Chambers of darkness, and to carry my soul I know not whither, I fear to hell: *O that I had been wise to understand this, to consider my latter end!* What would I now give to live but a few years more, to make provision for this soul, that must

must now enter the gulf of endless eternity.

Motive 8. *Consider the gaines will be exceeding great*: As will appear by these following particulars.

Would you hate sin as hell, and be more truly holy, *Consider your latter end.* This is most certain that all the evil antecedents, and dreadful consequences of death, spring and grow out of this bitter root; what is it that wounds, stings, paines and kills? what is it that brings Diseases & threatens death? that murders the body, and that damns and burnes the soul? What is that doth necessitate the to make use of Physick & Physicians whilst alive? and bringeth thee to a Coffin and Grave when thou art dead? is it not sin which thou embracest in thy bosom?

You poor, blind, deluded fouls, as little and as lovely as sin looks in your wanton eyes, it is the Mother and Nurse of all your miseries, hacht in hell, the Devils spawn or excrement. *He that committeth sin is of the devil*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. This is that evil

evil thing and bitter that hales death and hell at the heels of it; yea, that arms death, devils and hell against us. Were it not for this black, ugly, fierce, cruel and bloudy adversary, Law or Justice could not condemn us, Death could not kill us, Devils could not torment us, Hell could not burn us.

Sin is the traitor and Murderer of your immortal souls, and those nails that will shortly dig your Graves: & will you hug, hide and hold it fast? Will a woman put that knife into her bosom, that hath kill'd or murder'd her dear Child or Husband? no by no means; it must be broken and cast away for ever. Now Sirs, if sin be the enemy, use it as an enemy or murderer, kill it, take the sacrificing knife and cut the throat of it, or strike the heart vein, and let it bleed until it dies. Deal by it as *Samuel* by *Agag*, cut it in pieces. Did you think seriously of death and hell, you would hate it to purpose, and say, away to hell with it, from whence it came; and it would put you upon a desire and earnest endeavour after holiness: Being expos'd to a dissolution, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

ness, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. But if you forget death, you will make dreadful work; namely, your accounts greater, and hell the hotter; you will increase your sin, and God will heap up wrath against the day of wrath. And if ever God shew mercy it will cost you dear, your souls must mourn, your hearts must break and bleed for sin; for unless you repent, you will certainly be damned, *Luk.* 13. 5.

2. Would you speedily call off your hearts from the world, & lay up treasure in heaven, *Remember your latter end:* In the greatest affluence of worldly prosperity always consider that you must die.

Poor worldlings! that make gold your hope, whose plottings and ploddings are for earth. If death and eternity were more in your thoughts, you would let go that in your affections which you cannot hold in your possession, and love that but a little that will be lost, and which you cannot love long; Riches have wings, and they will be gone. Consider how little the things of the world will stand you in stead in the evil day: your gold and silver cannot keep you from diseases while you live, nor from

hell

hell after you are dead, *Prov* 11. 4. *Pſal.* 49. 6, 7.

It falleth out with many of the great ſtorers of this world, as it doth with a Sumpter Horſe, who all the day carrieth a great treaſure on his back, but at night it is taken from him, and he thruſt into a foul Stable. So many wealthy worldlings that tire themſelves to get and carry worldly treaſure, when death cometh, its taken from them and they for their ill getting or ill uſing of it, are thruſt down to hell: the rich man dyed, and in hell lift up his eyes.

And if you would deaden your hearts to this empty earth, and look after a treaſure above, a happineſs beyond the grave, that ſhall laſt as long as your ſouls ſhall laſt; think often of death, this would divert your worldly cares and projects.

Remember from this day to your laſt day cannot be long, your Journey or Voyage is ſhort, and a little Proviſion is enough; neither Poverty nor Riches, but food convenient, is the deſire and choice of a Citizen of *Sion*. Converſe more with death, and be often looking

into eternity, and thou mayeſt here (as it were) a voice ſpeaking to thee, as God to *Baruch*, *Jer.* 45. 4, 5. *I will break down, and pluck up, and ſeekeſt thou great things, ſeek them not.* Death is the great Leveller that will make all equal, and you that graſp the world moſt greedily, will find it but vanity, for all is vanity, is the language of experience, *Eccl.* 1. 2. 1 *John* 2. 17.

When *Samuel* was to anoint *Saul*, he brought or directed him to *Rachels* Sepulcher, and to this end (as is ſuppos'd) namely, to ſuppreſs or prevent haughty, proud thoughts that might ariſe from that new and great preferment. And if the ſuppoſition be true, it is as if he had ſpoken thus. *Saul*, God hath highly honoured you, and I annoint you King: But remember, here lies the duſt of that beautiful *Rachel*, and though you are, now King in *Iſrael*, yet you muſt be as *Rachel*, *viz.* laid in a Grave or Sepulcher, the thoughts of which is a very mortifying Meditation. You that have the waters of a full Cup, that wallow in wealth, and ſwim in worldly glory, to wean you from the world (that your hearts may

not

not be turned into Earth, and buryed before you are buryed) keep fresh in your thoughts death and eternity, *Job* 14. 14.

3. Would you be deeply sensible of the sad and doleful condition of unbeleivers when they come to dye? think seriously of your latter end. What will you do in the hour of distress, when God shall call for your breath, change your countenance, and require your souls, if you have made no preparation for death and Judgement?

Poor souls! I would pity you with my very heart, to think how ignorant you are of your great concernment; you eat, drink, sleep, buy, sell, and get gain; but slight your souls, and do not consider of the evil day.

Wo be unto him that is alone, that is alone in life, and alone in death, that hath no Christ to befriend him, or stand by him in that woeful day, that cometh to lye down in the death-bed without peace or pardon, who shall go into a Grave, and stand before the Ba without an Advocate to plead for him.

It is most probable, you may have dife

ferent apprehenſions of yout ſelves and others in your dying hour; ſo the nearer the object, the clearer the ſight; O ſinners! when the door of eternity begins to open (as uſually it doth to men dying) you will have other thoughts of your ſelves, and other men. Here you ruffle it out, thinking your ſelves above, and better then others; behold great *Babel*, ſaid that proud perſon in his Princely Palace; but when pale death appears, it will pull down thoſe Peacocks feathers, and cauſe their creſts to fall. Now the world ſhines and ſparkles in your eyes, which makes you judge and think that nothing but Riches, Honor, and Greatneſs can make you happy, then it wil appear (the pant being off) to be an empty nothing. As for the pure in heart, who mourn for ſin, and mind itheir ſoules above the world, who are ſcorn'd, jeer'd hated, being look'd upon as a company of poor, penſive, ſneaking, beſotted fools, will then be adjudged the beſt, wiſeſt, and happieſt men on earth. Now ſin is excuſed, and called a light and little thing, (or trick of youth, but then it will have at

black

black and dreadful face and feel more heavy then lead, taſte more bitter then death it ſelf.

Now the Damned and curſed Crue, are your brave Boon companions, and boſom friends? but when you are come to your dying groanes, and cold ſweats, away with them, their ſight is terrible. But know, that you who have been companions in ſin, muſt be companions in ſufferings, and lye down together in everlaſting chaines and flames; you ſhall be fettered and bound together and never part any more for ever.

Now an intereſt in Chriſt, and a life of holineſs is little valued, and every luſt and triffle preferred, then a world, a wrold for a Chriſt; forty thouſand pound for a good Conſcience, cryed out a wicked wealthy worldling, when dying and paſſing into eternity.

4. Would you expedite your Repentance, try your ſtate, and make all ready for the other world; think upon this laſt enemy, the King of terrors, that will ere long terminate your dayes, and then all your opportunities will be gone for ever.

If the thoughts of death, especially the second death, did but influence your hearts, and penitrate upon your Consciences, you would easily be perswaded to cast away your sins: namely, to cut off a right hand, or pluck out a right eye, and to rent your hearts to mourn in secret, to afflict your souls and to put your mouths in the dust if so be there may be hope, *Lam.* 3. 28. 29. We see that men in a journey if they think they have daly enough, they are slack and slow enough; but if they see but a little time, they will make speed. If a man must do the work of a whole day in half a day he will make hast: Repentance is not a work for a day, though a daly work, our whole life is little enough to compleat and perfect it. As long as we sin, we must mourn, while we provoke the Judge; we must plead guilty and sue our out pardon with Ropes about our necks, and smiting on our breasts (and if it might be) with tears of blood. And the great things of death and Judment *will* prepare and prompt you to do it suddenly; for when the day

day is gone, the night comes, and the Grave and Hell have ſhut their mouths upon you, what can be done? *Eccleſ.* 9. 10.

5. Would you pray more frequently? more fervently then ever you have done, remember you muſt dye.

The Monuments and Statues of the dead (as one notes) are made in a praying poſture, *viz.* kneeling, and with hands lifted up to heaven (as if the remembrance of them now dead) ſhould teach us our duty, what we muſt do whilſt living. One that was wont to pray often in a day, being asked why he ſpent ſo much time in prayer, gave no other anſwer, but this, *I muſt dye, I muſt dye,* An awakening apprehenſion of a mans entrance upon an endleſs ſtate, and a ſpeedy approach before the holy God, will make him pray, and that importunately. If there be in the Family a Husband, wife, or Child near unto death, almoſt every one that cometh about the bed will be lifting up hands, and putting up of prayers, and then you cry out, ſend ſpeedily for ſome ſober, ſerious Miniſter, or for ſome

ſolid, ſavoury, praying Chriſtian, to commend his ſad caſe to God; The young man that lately ſuffered for Murder, who came into *Newgate* as ignorant of God, as the horſe or the Mule, and as ſenſleſs of his ſoul as a ſtock or a ſtone, was by the acxceſs and application of Miniſters to him, convinced of his deſperate caſe, and through the grace and bleſſing of God upon his appointed means he ſeemed ſo deeply ſenſible of the dreadful hazzard of his precious ſoul, that he did with ſo much brokeneſs of heart confeſs his ſins, pray, and plead with God in Chriſt for pardon, even to the wonder and amazement of thoſe Miniſters and Chriſtians who where preſent. And he being asked how often he prayed, anſwered five or ſix times a day, and it was with ſuch meltings, and multitudes of teares, that did moove the very bowels of the Auditors (and as they ſaid) turned them into tears. Thus you ſee how a powerful conviction of death and judgement may prevail upon the heart, to make them cry to God, that never prayed before. As for you that can lye down at night, riſe up in the

the morning and go about the world without ſecret or family prayer : I muſt tell you that you have but ſlight, if any thoughts of death and eternity and no ſence of, or regard of your everlaſting condition, which is a ſad ſymptom of a Chriſtleſs ſtate.

6. Would you do good to others, to their bodies and to their ſouls, conſider you muſt dye, for after death you will be utterly incapacitated of doing any thing. The wiſe man ſpeaking of the ſeaſon of doing, and of the viciſſitudes of mans life, namely, that there is a time to be born, and a time to dye : and he having obſerved the iſſues and changes of providence that hath made every thing beautiful in its ſeaſon, concludes that it is beſt for a man to do good in his life, *Eccleſ.* 3. 12. As we have therefore opportunity (ſaith the Apoſtle) let us do good to all men, *Gal.* 6. 10. When it is in the power of thine hand to to do it, *Prov.* 3. 27. Sirs, the real thoughts of death will prompt you to give a portio n to ſix and alſo to ſeven, and that in ſeaſon ; for when death comes, all is gone,

then its no more in power of thine hand to do.

Did you now beleive and consider, that you must dye, and give an account to God, the great Landlord and Donor of all your good things (great Receipts, having great accounts) you would not contract your hearts, and shut up your bowels against those many miserable objects, who are so often in your view.

Now, that you may be like sheep, and not like swine, be good in your life; and let your acts of mercy be distributed in the morning, the fittest season to sow this seed; therefore speedily draw out thy soul to the hungry, before death separate thy soul and body, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased, *Isa.* 58. 10. *Heb.* 13. 14.

7. Would you get and keep sincerity (a precious Pearl indeed) think often of death and judgement. Then it will be tryed, then it will stand you in stead. Sincerity (the Scripture perfection) is the best of a Christian, the grace of every grace, for faith unfeigned, and love in sincerity, are the very nerves & sinews of Christianity.

The next best to the precious blood and righte-

righteous of our glorified Redeemer, (to plead for us at the hour of death, and in the Court of Heaven) is truth in the inward parts, *Isa.* 38. 3. To be a mourner in *Sion* is matter of solace, and real comfort, but to be a sinner in *Sion* is sad, and it will be a matter of torment. A *Judas* among the Apostles, a Devil in *Samuel's* Mantle, is a Devil indeed. The sinners in *Sion* are afraid, and cause enough; for to live and dye a hypocrite is most dreadful, because hypocrisie will certainly bring you down to hell; yea, the hottest place of that devouring fire, and everlasting burning, shall be the Hypocrites portion, *Isa.* 33. 14. *Mat.* 24. 5.

8. Lastly, would you redeem your time, and be greedy of getting grace in the day of grace, for the present, spiritual, and eternal salvation of your souls; think seriously of your end.

You sleepy secure souls! did you consider that the night of death will come certainly, and may come suddenly, you would work while it is day, and not be so mad as to put off beleiving, repenting and soul afflicting work, self-trying and

and approving work, until the evil day of old age, a ſick bed, or dying pangs ſeize upon you. Conſider, a death-bed repentance is ſeldom had, and ſeldom good, or a ſick-bed repentance is ſeldom a ſound, but often a ſick repentance. Now if you would imitate your Lord, to work while it is day, remember you muſt dye, *John* 9. 4.

Directions and helps to conſider of your latter end.

Direct. 1. *Search diligently to find out what it is that keeps you, and the ſerious thoughts of death and eternity, at ſo great a diſtance, and cry mightily to God and ſpeedily to remove it.* If it be either Ignorance, Atheiſme, Unbeleif, Senſuality, Earthly-mindedneſs, or Security, be deeply ſenſible of it, and ſet Prayer to work, pour out thy very ſoul to God with greateſt fervour and importunity. Say as *Moſes, Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, ſo is thy wrath: Soteach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom,* Pſa. 90.

96. 11,12. Sirs, 'tis ſpiritual wiſdom will cauſe you to conſider; then cry after knowledg, and lift up thy voice for underſtanding, *Prov.* 2. 3, 4. For ſhe is thy life, *Prov.* 4. 13, its as much as thy life and ſoul is worth. Then enter into thy Cloſet, and fall down upon thy knees, and pray to God in the name of Chriſt for ſpiritual wiſdome: we muſt ſeek it. *Ezek.* 36. 37. And god will give it, *James* 1. 5. Beg more then for thy life, for a truly wiſe and awakened heart, without which the great concerns of God, and thine Immortal ſoul be for ever neglected.

Direct. 2. Diligently and faithfully uſe and improve the moſt awakening means which have a tendency hereunto:

1. *Set your ſelves under a powerful, faithful and ſoul-ſearching Miniſtry, who make the converſion of ſouls their main buſineſs:* A lazy ſleepy miniſter is not like to waken a ſecure ſinner, the conviction and converſion of ſouls is, not the mark they ſhoot at. Reſolve to hear,

love,

have countenance, and encourage thoſe that grapple moſt with the conſcience, and earneſtly endeavour to drive and draw ſoules to Jeſus Chriſt, by ſetting the bleſſing and the curſe, life and death before them. Conviction leads the way to converſion, as the needle to the thread: what's a plaiſter worth, where there is no wound? 'tis the broken bones cry out for help, the whole need not the Phyſitian: General, overly preaching, is like the ſword in the ſcabbard, that doth not cut or wound, or like Phyſick in the bottel that doth not penetrate or work; but plain, particular, convincing preaching (ſuch as *Nathans* to *David*, or *Peters* to the Jews 2 *Sam.*12.7. *Acts* 2. 36.) is like the ſword in the bowels, or Phyſick in the body; that will pain to purpoſe. Thoſe Preachers that have no faculty of reproving, and convincing ſleepy ſecure ſinners, are like a company of drone Bees, that have loſt their ſting, being good for nothing. But they that have the charge of ſo many Golden Fleeces ſhould ſever the Wheat from the Chaff, the Sheep from the Goats, the precious from the

the vile and in ſo doing we ſhall be as God's mouth, and free from the blood of all men.

O then, let this dreadful and amazing Doctrine of death and judgement, be more frequently and effectually preached, that ſouls in peril, near run, may ſee their ſin and danger, and flye to Chriſt as the only refuge; knowing the terrour of God we perſwade men, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. *Mat.* 3, 7.

2. *Converſe with the beſt Chriſtians, viz.* them that are grave, ſober, ſolid, ſavoury and ſound in faith: Such as make Religion their great buſineſs, who love to ſpeak of God, and of the world to come, and by whoſe counſel and example you may be ſtir'd up, and perſwaded to repentance and holineſs, to conſider of death and judgement, Theſe were *Davids* excellent ones in whom he did delight, and made his companions, *Pſal.* 16. 3 119. 63.

3. *Read the beſt Books*, and thoſe that treat of death and judgement, but eſpecially the word of God. There are the pure, Chryſtal ſtreams and richeſt Mines; in this field you will find the Pearl,

Pearl. *Let the word of God dwell in you richly*, be not ignorant of any part of it, but be ſure to acquaint thy ſelf with thoſe Scriptures that ſpeak of the ſhortneſs of life, the certainty of death and judgement, heaven and hell: Read the Book of *Job*, and the twelfth Chapter of *Eccleſiaſtes*, *Pſal.* 39. *Pſal.* 90. And let me deſire you to be often urging upon your hearts ſome of thoſe Scriptures that ſet forth the dreadfulneſs of that place of torment, that will be the portion of all that forget God, and make no proviſion for their precious ſouls: Some few I have here ſet down, which I deſire you would all conſider, and apply. *Upon the wicked he ſhall rain fire and brimſtone, and a horrible tempeſt, this ſhall be the portion of their Cup*, Pſal. 11. 6. *Woe be unto the wicked, it ſhall go ill with them*, Iſa. 3. 10. *He ſhall caſt them into a furnace of fire, there ſhall be weeping, wailing and gnaſhing of teeth*, Matth. 13. 42. Iſa. 33. 14. 66. 15. Matth. 25. 41. Luk. 16. 25, 26. 2 Theſ. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 6. 8, 16, 17.

Direct-

Direct. 3. Make conſcience of ſetting apart a little time every day on purpoſe to think of your latter end. Do it ſo frequently, until death and you become familar; ever and anon put thy ſelf into a poſture of dying, converſe with thy winding ſheet, Coffin, Grave, let thy great change be ſo upon thy heart, that thou may'ſt every morning or evening walk a turn or two with death: Remember, however it be with thee now, thou muſt ere long be gaſping and groaning for breath upon thy dying bed, and grapple with the King of terrours, and in a moment go down to the Grave, and ſhall come up no more, *Job* 10. 21.

If thou ſhouldſt affect thy heart with thoughts of thy latter end, go down to *Golgotha*, and think upon thoſe dry bones, & putrified bodies, and there revive the

the memory of your departed Relations Husbands, Wives, Children, Friends, Neighbours, and look beyond the Chambers of the Grave, converse with those miserable departed souls, give the prisoners of the pit a visit. Meditate on the raging furious flames, that dismal darkness, smoak and stink of the botomless pit, the screeking of the damn'd and roaring of the devils, the heart piercing complaints for water to cool their scorching tongues. And when thou dost think upon those millions of souls that are hanging up in hell, reflect upon thy selfs and expect thy turn speedily. Suppose every day thy last, every meal thy last, every journey thy last, every duty, Sacrament, Sermon, thy last. And when the Lords day cometh, think with thy self this will be the last spiritual market, that I shall have to buy the spiritual Oyl of grace and to provide for the Bridegrooms coming; after this day is ended, I may never more hear the Lord Jesus speak to me by the mouths of his faithful Ministers, never be invited to come to Christ, or to beleive, repent, part with sin, and accept of a pardon more, and so demean

thy

thy self every day, and in every duty, as if thou should'st be called to Gods Bar, and give up thine account at night. In all thy thoughts, words and actions, say to thy self, would I do thus, and thus, *viz.* would I eat, drink, sleep, converse, buy, sell, preach, hear, pray, or worse, if I certainly knew this day would be my last. O let that Motto, *Memento mori*, which some carry in their Rings, be engraven on your hearts, it being the great concernment of our lives. This is that which God people, and some of the heathen too, have been careful to remember: King *Asa* made his Sepulcher in his life time, 2 *Cron.* 16. 14. and some in their Gardens, and places of solace and delight, as *Joseph of Arimathea*, *John* 19. 41. And some of the Heathen were wont to walk among the Graves, to put them in mind of death; some have had their Graves alwayes before their Gates, other a dead mans skul presented every day at their Tables; and shall we that beleive the doctrine of the other world, put off the serious thoughts of death? *Solomon* adviseth us to go to the house of mourning, telling us it is better because the liv-

living will lay it to heart. When you hear the tidings of the death of your Friends, relations, or Neighbours, go thither, though not personally, yet contemplatively, in your minds & thoughts, go, and put your selves in their stead. And think thus, a living man or woman is become a dead Corps, or cold clay, the soul is gone to its everlasting habitation; but to what place whether to be comforted or tormented, who can tell? If he were a godly man, he is certainly gone to heaven, if thou art such a one, thy soul will shortly be with him: but if an ungodly man he is certainly gone to hell, and now among the Devils: and if thou art such a one, thou shalt ere long be there too. 'Tis true the dead can have no thoughts of the living: but the living (saith *Solomon*) know that they must die. And you that are young, when you hear of the death of a lively lusty young man, or a lovely beautiful young woman, stop, reflect, and consider, may not this be thy case O man, woman, or child, in a very little space. I shall say no more by way of direction, only desire you to review the particulars

lars before mentioned; and you that are Parents and Masters of Families, who make conscience of looking to the souls of those committed to your charge, may cause your Children and Servants to learn by heart the particulars I here set down.

1. *That it is most certain an end will be.*

2. *At our latter end all things in this world will be gone for ever.*

3. *All the pleasures of sin will be gone, and leave nothing but a sting.*

4. *That only which is eternal will stand me in stead.*

5. *Consider which of the two eternities are you going towards.*

6. *We are all near our everlasting habitation.*

7. *You know not how suddenly, or unexpected your end may be.*

8. *When death comes, your souls are stated, your eternity is cast.*

9. *'Tis a dreadful and amazing sight, to see a Christless soul breathing out his last.*

4. *Use*

4. *Vſe* May be of comfort to the poor people of God, who through fear of death are all their life-time ſubject to bondage. Let not you hearts be trobled, fear not, neither be terrified becauſe of this King of fears: But cheer up your ſpirits, and comfort up your hearts with this, that death as terrible as it is to the wicked, cannot hurt you. The day of your death will be better then the day of your birth, and thereffore death isput into the Beleivers Inventory, and reckoned amongſt his priviledges, 1 *Cor.* 3.22. Death will be gain to the Godly man, *viz.* an out-let to all his preſent miſery, and an in-let to endleſs glory, Then the truely penitent, perplexed wearied ſoul ſhall be perfectly free from the power of Satan the firy darts, and dreadful temprations of that unclean ſpirit. Then the old Serpent for ever will be under their feet. Then the body of death ſhall be put off, and the in-dwelling of ſin, that natural fountain of corruption will be perfectly dryed up. You ſhall never com-

complain of vain thoughts, or hard hearts any more: Never doubt of the truth of grace or favour of God more: The beleiver shall then be with Jesus Christ; the day of his dissolution will be the day of his Coronation, he shall then receive the Crown, and sit down on the Throne, and enter into his Masters joy, which is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

Object. I *sometimes think of death, but the thoughts of death and judgement are very terrible; I fear I am not fit to die, how shall it be known?*

Answ. There is a habitual fitness for death and an actual fitness for death. Every graciously upright man or woman in the world that fears God in truth, is habitually fit to dye, so prepared for his great change, that the sting of death, or second death shall not hurt him, having past the the strait gate, shot the gulf, he is out of danger. As soon as a man is in a

state

state of grace born again, made a new creature, and by faith united unto the Lord Jesus Christ; God is reconciled, his person justified, his sins pardoned, and recorded in the Court of Heaven, though his pardon is not brought down, transcrib'd and seal'd in the Court of his own conscience. The truly converted soul is Gods special favourite, and shall lodge in his bosom, and never more be out of his favour: 'tis true, heaven may be out of sight, God may frown, but will never condemn. *There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ*, Rom. 8 1. *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous*, 1 John 2. 1. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect, it is God that justifieth, it is Christ that dyed*, Rom. 8: 33. 34.

Quest. *When is the godly man actually prepared for death?*

Answ. When his spiritual estate is well setled, *viz.* all made sure between God and his soul: particularly,

1. When

1. When a man is truly conscious to himself that he hath sincerely, and with much brokenes of heart repented of all his known sins committed before or after conversion, so that there is no fresh or former guilt remaining on him. This godly sorrow, is the godly mans pleasure, he delights to be sowing in tears, loves with his soul a wet seed-time; for they that sow in tears, shall reap a harvest of joy, which is a time of refreshing from the presence of God, compare, *Psal.* 126. 5, 6. and *Acts* 3. 19.

2. When sin is so great a burden, that he is weary of this body of death, and willing the infected house should be pulled down, that the Leprosie might be cured, that so he might never sin or offend his Father more. The serious thoughts, and sence of which is a heavy burden, and matter of greif, that makes him groan and complain. We in this Tabernacle do groans being burthened: and O how bitterly did St. *Paul.* complain *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* He had been in deaths

often for the sake of his dear Lord, but this death, his body of sin, troubled him more then any: It was so great a burden to holy *David*, that he felt it in his very bones, *Psal.* 38. 3.

3. The godly man is fit to dye, when the work of grace is perfected, and his Generation work ended. When the believing soul hath his Vessel full of Oyl, and the Wedding garments of the glorious Righteousnes of Christ about him, then he is a Vessel of honour prepared unto glory, *Rom.* 9. 23. wrought for the self same thing, 2 *Cor.* 4. 5. and made meet, or fit for the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Col.* 1. 12. The ship that's laden or fraughted, is fit to put to Sea, and to sail from hence, or for its appointed Port. The labourer is fit to receive his wages when he hath done his work; so when the heaven born soul hath faithfully served his Generation, and done the work in his Place, Calling, and Relations, for which God sent him and intrusted him (though the best fall short, being in some degrees unprofitable servants) then is he fit

fit to welcome death, though to the flesh its the Kings of terrours. When the godly man, liveing or dying, can apeal to the heart-searching God, as *Hezekiah* did, *Isa.* 38. And say, I *have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*, *John* 17. I have finish'd my course, and there is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. this makes him fit and willing to depart to be with Christ.

When sin is pardoned, and the pardon sealed, *i. e.* when the clamorous noise of the guilt of sin in the conscience, is calmed and silenced, by the blood of sprinkling, and his evidences for heaven, bright and clear, so that his better country is within view, and the gate of glory wide open, namely abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 *Pet.* 1. 11, *Lot* had a mind to prolong his time in *Sodom*, it was a goodly City, and he was not well assured whither to go, when he had left it. But when the gracious soul his assured of a better state, a better life, that's hid with Christ in God, so that he can say, as

once an eminent godly man dying: I *ſhall but change my place: I ſhall not change my company*: He may then (being ſeal'd to the day of Redemption) long for his diſſolution.

5. When the heart is weaned from, and weary of this evil world and ſo enflam'd with love to Chriſt, that it cannot live without him, or be abſent from him: Having taſted of the Grapes of *Eſhcol*, he muſt go to *Canaan* to ſee the good Land, that goodly Mountain. A foreſight or glimps of the ſweetneſs, beauty and glory of the Lord Jeſus, will cauſe moſt vehement longing to be with him. *Now let thy ſervant depart in peace for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* For this we groan earneſtly. And O how confidently, quietly, and comfortably may ſuch a ſoul entertain the thoughts of death, that hath ſincerely repented of all ſin, and to whom ſin is ſo greivous a burden, that he would dye to be rid of it. And whoſe ſoul is fill'd and fraughted with grace, and aſſured of glory, and his heart ſent as a Harbinger to Heaven before him. And indeed a

ſerious and hearty conſideration of our eternal ſtate would provoke us to preſs earneſtly after all this.

To cloſe up all, let me ask you (as in the preſence of the great Judg of quick and dead, at whoſe dreadful tribunal you muſt all ſhortly ſtand) theſe following Queries.

Quer. 1.

First, Whether a ſeaſonable preparation for death and judgement, *viz.* how you may eſcape Hell, and come ſafe to Heaven, be not the moſt urgent and important buſineſs, that you have in all the world? Let your conſcience judge and determine.

Quer. 2.

Are not they in a very happy condition, that do believe, repent and turn to God with their whole heart? who by living a life of grace, are truly prepared for death, and out of the dreadful hazzard of looſing Heaven? *Rom.* 8. 1. *Pſal.* 37. 37.

Quer. 3.

Is it not possible that you being yet on this side the Grave and Hell, may prepare for this evil day? were you resolv'd upon it, would be done: you have often intended it, promised it; when shall it be? none but the Devil, and your flesh will stop and hinder you.

Quer. 4.

Do you firmly believe the things here will fail, that death will come, that sin that accursed thing will stop, and that the impenitent sinners case at the hour of death wil be sad, and very desperate? let me say to all such, there is not a night you lye down upon your beds, but you run a very great hazzard: If death should call and you not ready, you must go, though you be ruin'd to eternity. *Matth.* 25. 10, 11, 12, 19, 22, 23.

Quer. 5.

Have you so liv'd, as to be fit to lye down

down in a Grave, to rise again, and stand before God who is a consuming fire? Do you know your selves in a state of grace, that you are new born, that your evidences for heaven are clear and certain? is your work done? do your lamps burn? and have you a well-grounded assurance, that you are in the number of those, to whom death will be a privilege? *Phil.* 21.

Quer. 6.

Can you chearfully, and without dread, entertain the thoughts of a dissolution, and of leaving all your earthly and sensual delights? Suppose the dreadful Judge should at this instant send death into this place, with the names of five or six of you in his writ or forehead, and death should say, you, and you, this man, and that woman, must go along with me.

I have received a comand from the great and terrible God, (who hath the power of death and of hell) to bring you young man, young woman, this day or night before the Judgement seats

I have often warned you by sending my Deputies, and and that this ten, twenty or forty yeares, every Coffin, every dead Corps or Grave you have seene, was so many intimations of my coming. Now (saith death) I am come, look here upon my commission, see my dart, and my sting. This dart must kill the body, and rend thy soul unto eternity. I command thee this moment to bid adieu to and take thy leave of Friends, Relations, Houses, Lands, pleasures of sin, once for all. Thou shalt never see or injoy them more, *Luke* 12. 19, 20. O how can you think of your dying, the worlds burning, the trumpets sounding, the deads rising and standing at the Bar, and not fear and tremble? You Sons and Daughters of pleasures! did you consider what horror and astonishment dogs you at the heels, which will inevitably come upon you, as travel on a woman with child, you would not say unto God, depart and treasure up wrath, lay up scorges and scorpions for your distressed souls against the last day.

Quer. 7.

Let me ask you that pass for Saints, and hope for Heaven whether your consciences in secret do not tell you that you have made poor preparation for it; yea, it may have done less for Heaven then many that are now in hell.

You say you must dye and come to judgement; but how stands the case as to the other world? If you look downward to this world, its well; but how is it within with your precious soul? Do you beleive that Atheists, Unbeleivers, Drunkards, Swearers, Murderers, Thieves, Persecutors, Lyars Sabbath-breakers, Adulterers, worldlings, are going swiftly to hell? Do you beleive that Christs flock is little, and not fear your selves? Do you think that *Esau*, *Judas*, *Ahab*, *Agrippa*, *Herod*, *Simon Magus*, the foolish Virgins are in hell, and yet confident of your going to heaven? These have out done many of you, *Esau wept and cryed for the blessing*, *Heb.* 12. 17. Ahab *humbled himself* 1 Kings 12, 29. Herod *did many things, and heard* John *joyfully*, Mark 16. 20. Agrippa *was almost a Christian*, Acts 6. 28.

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The Scribe was not far from the kingdom of God, Mark 12. 34. The foolish Virgins were not prophane, they took care to trim their Lamps, and knock at the door. Now what sins have you left? what grace have you exercis'd what duties have you performed? and how? Take heed you be not deceived; *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able*, Luk. 13. 24.

Quer. 8.

4. You having so many warnings, time and means to prepare for death & judgment, and will not, who will pity you when you perish? God will not, *Prov.* 1. 26, 27. Christ will not, *Luke* 19. 27. Angels, Saints, Ministers will not, all will say, *away with them*, let them be damn'd.

And O what a killing and amazing sight will Christs coming in the clouds be to all that either denie this coming, or who would not prepare for it. His incarnation was terrible, *Matth.* 2. 3. His Crucifixion was more terrible, *Luk.* 23. 44. 45. 47. 48. But his being on the tribunal, will be most terrible. Then shall the tribes of the earth mourn, *Matth.* 24. 30. And men cry to the rocks and mountains to

fall

fall on them, *Rev.* 6. 15, 16. When they shall see so many thousands and millions of men and women dragged down with all the Devils of hell, to that burning lake of fire and brimstone. How will they then mourn for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit, and with bitterness of soul wish they had never heard of Christ, that they had been born among the Heathen or never had a being or enjoy'd a life of pleasure upon the Earth! How will the wretched sinner beat his breast, pluck off his hair, tear his bowels, crying out (when he sees all hope is gone) O that I had now no soul! or that this immortal soul were mortal! that I might now dye and breath no more! or that my sentence might be but to lodge with Devils in this burning lake ten thousand years, that so I might not remain in a state of banishment from the face and presence of God to all eternity.

O then pray! that serious thoughts of death may be alwayes upon thine heart, and whethere thou goest let them go, and where thou lodgest let them lodg that thou mayest speak of it to thy Children, and Family, when thou sittest in thine

thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou lyest down, and when thou risest up. O let these great things of death and judgment, be bound as a signe upon thine hand, and write them upon the posts of thine house and on thy gates: that they may be always before thine eyes and for thy good alwayes; that thou may'st beware least thou forget the *Lord* thy God, and the everlasting concernments of thine immortal soul and gods anger be kindled against thee, and destroy thee suddenly with a mighty destruction.

Consider now what I have spoken, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things, 2 *Tim.* 2. 7. Which is that God wisheth in the Text: *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.*

FINIS.